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DAVID HUME
Esq.

THE
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,

FROM

The INVASION of JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

The REVOLUTION in 1688.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

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A NEW EDITION, Corrected.

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THE

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

*The Britains, — Romans, — Saxons, — the Heph-
tarchy. — The Kingdom of Kent — of Northum-
berland — of East-Anglia — of Mercia — of
Essex — of Suffex — of Wessex.*

The BRITAINS.

THE curiosity entertained by all civilized nations, CHAP. I.
of enquiring into the exploits and adventures of
their ancestors, commonly excites a regret that the his-
tory of remote ages should always be so much involved
in obscurity, uncertainty, and contradiction. Ingenious
men, possessed of leisure, are apt to push their researches
beyond the period in which literary monuments are
framed or preserved, without reflecting, that the history
of past events is immediately lost or disfigured when in-
trusted to memory and oral tradition, and that the ad-
ventures of barbarous nations, even if they were record-
ed, could afford little or no entertainment to those born in
a more cultivated age. The convulsions of a civilized
state usually compose the most instructive and most in-
teresting part of its history; but the sudden, violent, and
unprepared revolutions, incident to Barbarians, are so
much guided by caprice, and terminate so often in cruel-
ty, that they disgust us by the uniformity of their ap-
pearance; and it is rather fortunate for letters that they are
buried in silence and oblivion. The only certain means,
by which nations can indulge their curiosity in researches
VOL. I. B concern-

CHAP. concerning their remote origin, is to consider the language, manners and customs of their ancestors, and to compare them with those of the neighbouring nations. The fables which are commonly employed to supply the place of true history, ought entirely to be disregarded; and if any exception be admitted to this general rule, it can only be in favour of the antient Grecian fictions, which are so celebrated and so agreeable, that they will ever be the objects of the attention of mankind. Neglecting therefore, all traditions or rather tales concerning the more early history of Britain, we shall only consider the state of the inhabitants, as it appeared to the Romans on their invasion of this country: We shall briefly run over the events, which attended the conquest made by that empire, as belonging more to Roman than British story: We shall hasten through the obscure and uninteresting period of Saxon annals: And shall reserve a more full narration for those times, when the truth is both so well ascertained and so complete as to promise some entertainment and instruction to the reader.

ALL antient writers agree in representing the first inhabitants of Britain as a tribe of the Gauls or Celtæ, who peopled that island from the neighbouring continent. Their language was the same, their manners, their government, their superstition; varied only by those small differences, which time or a communication with the bordering nations must necessarily introduce. The inhabitants of Gaul, especially in those parts which lie contiguous to Italy, had acquired, from a commerce with their southern neighbours, some refinement in the arts, which gradually diffused themselves northwards, and spread but a very faint light over this island. The Greek and Roman navigators or merchants (for there were scarce any other travellers in those ages) brought back the most shocking accounts of the ferocity of the people, which they magnified, as usual, in order to excite the admiration of their countrymen. The south-east parts, however, of Britain had already, before the age of Cæsar, made the first and most requisite step towards a civil settlement; and the Britains, by tillage and agriculture, had there encreased to a great multitude^A. The other inhabitants of the island

^A Cæsar, lib. 4-

island still maintained themselves by pasture: They were clothed with skins of beasts: They dwelt in huts, which they reared in the forests and marshes, with which the country was covered: They shifted easily their habitation, when actuated either by the hopes of plunder or the fear of an enemy: The convenience of feeding their cattle was even a sufficient motive for removing their seats; And being ignorant of all the refinements of life, their wants and their possessions were equally scanty and limited.

THE Britains were divided into many small nations or tribes; and being a military people, whose sole property was their arms and their cattle, it was impossible, after, they had acquired a relish of liberty, for their princes or chieftains to establish any despotic authority over them. Their governments, though monarchical^B, were free, as well as those of all the Celtic nations; and the common people seem even to have enjoyed more liberty among them^C, than among the nations of Gaul^D, from whom they were descended. Each state was divided into factions within itself^E: It was agitated with emulation towards the neighbouring states: And while the arts of peace were yet unknown, wars were the chief occupation, and formed the chief object of ambition, among the people.

THE religion of the Britains was one of the most considerable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were their priests, possessed great authority among them. Besides ministering at the altar, and directing all religious duties, they presided over the education of youth; they enjoyed an immunity from wars and taxes; they possessed both the civil and criminal jurisdiction; they decided all controversies among estates as well as among private persons, and whoever refused to submit to their decree was exposed to the most severe penalties. The sentence of excommunication was denounced against him: He was forbid access to the sacrifices or public worship: He was debarred all intercourse with his fellow-citizens, even in the common affairs of life: His company was universally shunned, as profane and dangerous;

B 2

He

^B Diod. Sic. lib. 4. Mela, lib. 3. cap. 6. Strabo, lib. 4.

^C Dion Cassius, lib. 75.

^D Caesar, lib. 6.

^E Tacit. Agr.

HISTORY of ENGLAND.

4

CHAP. I. He was refused the protection of law^F: And death itself became to him an acceptable relief from the misery and infamy to which he was exposed. Thus, the bands of government, which were naturally loose among that rude and turbulent people, were happily corroborated by the terrors of their superstition.

No species of superstition was ever more terrible than that of the Druids. Besides the severe penalties, which it was in the power of the ecclesiastics to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal transmigration of souls; and thereby extended their authority as far as the fears of their timorous votaries. They practised their rites in dark groves or other secret recesses^G; and in order to throw a greater mystery on their religion, they communicated their doctrines only to the initiated, and strictly forbade the committing them to writing; lest they should at any time be exposed to the examination of the profane vulgar. Human sacrifices were practised among them: The spoils of war were often devoted to their divinities; and they punished with the severest tortures whoever dared to secrete any part of the consecrated offering: These treasures they preserved in woods and forests, secured by no other guard than the terrors of their religion^H; and this conquest over human avidity, may be regarded as more signal than their prompting men to the most extraordinary and most violent efforts. No idolatrous worship ever attained such an ascendant over mankind as that of the antient Gauls and Britains; and the Romans, after their conquest, finding it impossible to reconcile those nations to the laws and institutions of their masters, while it maintained its authority, were at last obliged to abolish it by penal statutes; a violence, which had never in any other instance been practised by these tolerating conquerors^I.

The ROMANS.

THE Britains had long remained in this rude but independent state, when Cæsar, having over-run all Gaul by his victories, first cast his eye on their island. He was not allured either by its riches or its renown; but being

^F Cæsar, lib. 6. Strabo, lib. 4. ^G Plin. lib. 12. cap. 1.
^H Cæsar, lib. 6. ^I Sueton. in Vita Claudii.

being ambitious of carrying the Roman arms into a new world, then mostly unknown, he took advantage of a short interval in his Gaulic wars, and made an invasion on Britain. The natives, informed of his intention, were sensible of the unequal contest, and endeavoured to appease him by submissions, which, however, retarded not the execution of his design. After some resistance, he landed, as is supposed, at Deal; and having obtained several advantages over the Britains, and obliged them to promise hostages for their future obedience, he was constrained, by the necessity of his affairs, and the approach of winter, to withdraw his forces into Gaul. The Britains, relieved from the terror of his arms, neglected the performance of their stipulations, and that haughty conqueror resolved next summer to chastise them for this breach of treaty. He landed with a greater force; and though he found a more regular resistance from the Britains, who had united under Cassivelaunus, one of their petty princes; he discomfited them in every action. He advanced into the country, passed the Thames in the face of the enemy; took and burned the capital of Cassivelaunus; established his ally, Mandubratius, in the sovereignty of the Trinobantes, and having obliged the inhabitants to make him new submissions, he again returned with his army into Gaul, and left the authority of the Romans more nominal than real in this island.

THE civil wars, which ensued, and which prepared the way for the establishment of monarchy in Rome, saved the Britains from that yoke, which was ready to be imposed upon them. Augustus the successor of Cæsar, content with the victory obtained over the liberties of his own country, was little ambitious of acquiring fame by foreign wars; and being apprehensive lest the same unlimited extent of dominion, which had subverted the republic, might also overwhelm the empire, he recommended to his successors never to enlarge the territories of the Romans. Tiberius, jealous of the fame, which might be acquired by his generals, made this advice of Augustus a pretence for his inactivity^K. The mad sallies of Caligula, in which he menaced Britain with an invasion, served only to expose himself and the empire to ridicule: And the Britains had now, during almost a century,

^K Tacit. Agr.

CHAP.

I.

A. D. 43.

century, enjoyed their liberty unmolested; when the Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think seriously of reducing them under their dominion. Without seeking any more justifiable reasons of hostility than were employed by the latter Europeans in subjecting the Africans and Americans, they sent over an army under the command of Plautius, an able general, who gained some victories, and made a considerable progress in subduing the inhabitants. Claudius himself, finding matters sufficiently prepared for his reception, made a journey into Britain; and received the submission of several British states, the Cantii, Atrebates, Regni, and Trinobantes, who inhabited the south-east parts of the island and whom their possessions and cultivated manner of life rendered willing to purchase peace at the expence of their liberty. The other Britains under the command of Caractacus, still maintained an obstinate resistance, and the Romans made little progress against them; till Ostorius Scapula was sent over to command their armies. This general advanced the Roman conquests over the Britains; pierced into the country of the Silures, a warlike nation, who inhabited the banks of the Severne; defeated Caractacus in a great battle; took him prisoner, and sent him to Rome, where his magnanimous behaviour procured him better treatment than those conquerors usually bestowed on captive princes.

NOTWITHSTANDING these misfortunes, the Britains were not subdued; and this island was regarded by the ambitious Romans as a field in which military honour might still be acquired. Under the reign of Nero, Suetonius Paulinus was invested with the command, and prepared to signalize his name by victories over these barbarians. Finding that the island of Mona, now Anglesey, was the chief seat of the Druids, he resolved to attack it, and to subject a place, which was the center of their superstition, and which afforded protection to all their baffled forces. The Britains endeavoured to obstruct his landing on this sacred island, both by the force of their arms and the terrors of their religion. The women and priests were intermingled with the soldiers upon the shore; and running about with flaming torches in their hands, and

Tacit. Ann. lib. 12.

tossing their dishevelled hair, they struck greater terror into the astonished Romans by their howlings, cries, and execrations, than the real danger from the armed forces was able to inspire. But Suetonius, exhorting his troops to despise the menaces of a superstition, which they despised, impelled them to the attack, drove the Britains off the field, burned the Druids in the same fires which they had prepared for their captive enemies, destroyed all the consecrated groves and altars; and, having thus triumphed over the religion of the Britains, he thought his future progress would be easy, in reducing the people to subjection. But he was disappointed in his expectations. The Britains, taking advantage of his absence, were all in arms; and headed by Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, who had been treated in the most ignominious manner by the Roman tribunes, had already attacked with success several settlements of their insulting conquerors. Suetonius hastened to the protection of London, which was already a flourishing Roman colony; but he found on his arrival, that it would be requisite for the general safety to abandon that place to the merciless fury of the enemy. London was reduced to ashes; such of the inhabitants as remained in it, were cruelly massacred; the Romans and all strangers, to the number of 70,000, were put to the sword without distinction; and the Britains, by rendering the war thus bloody, seemed determined to cut off all hopes of peace or composition with the enemy. But this cruelty was revenged by Suetonius in a great and decisive battle, where 80,000 of the Britains are said to have perished; and Boadicea herself, rather than fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her own life by poison^M. Nero soon after recalled Suetonius from a government, where by suffering and inflicting so many severities, he was judged improper for composing the angry and alarmed minds of the inhabitants. After some interval, Cerealis received the command from Vespasian, and by his bravery propagated the terror of the Roman arms. Julius Frontinus succeeded Cerealis both in authority and reputation: But the general, who finally established the dominion of the Romans in this island, was Julius Agricola, who governed it in the reigns of Vespasian, Titus,

^M Tacit. Ann. lib. 14.

CHAP. Titus, and Domitian, and distinguished himself in that scene of action.

I.

THIS great commander formed a regular plan for subduing Britain, and rendering the acquisition useful to the conquerors. He carried his victorious arms northwards, defeated the Britains in every encounter, pierced into the inaccessible forests and mountains of Caledonia, reduced every thing to subjection in the southern parts of the island, and chased before him all the men of fiercer and more intractable spirits, who deemed war and death itself less intolerable than servitude under the victors. He even defeated them in a decisive action, which they fought under Calgacus, their leader; and having drawn a rampart, and fixed a chain of garrisons, between the firths of Clyde, and Forth, he thereby cut off the ruder and more barren parts of the island, and secured the Roman province from the incursions of the barbarous inhabitants^N.

DURING these military enterprizes, he neglected not the arts of peace. He introduced laws and civility among the Britains, taught them to desire and raise all the conveniences of life, reconciled them to the Roman language and manners, instructed them in letters and science, and employed every expedient to render those chains, which he had forged, both easy and agreeable to them^O. The inhabitants having experienced how unequal their own force was to resist that of the Romans, acquiesced in the dominion of their masters, and were gradually incorporated as a part of that mighty empire.

THIS was the last durable conquest made by the Romans; and Britain, once subdued, gave no farther inquietude to the victor. Caledonia alone, defended by its barren mountains, and by the contempt which the Romans entertained of it, sometimes infested the more cultivated parts of the island by the incursions of its inhabitants. The better to secure the frontiers of the empire, Adrian, who visited this island, built a strong rampart between the river Tyne and the Frith of Solway. Lollius Urbicus, under Antoninus Pius, repaired that of Agricola: Severus, who made an expedition into Britain, and carried his arms into the most northern extremity of it, added new fortifications to the wall of Adrian; and during all the reigns of the Roman emperors, such a profound tranquillity

^N Tacit. Agr.

^O Ibid.

city prevailed in Britain, that little mention is made of the affairs of that island by any historian. The only incidents which occur, are some seditions or rebellions of the Roman legions quartered there, and some usurpations of the imperial dignity by the Roman governors. The natives, disarmed, dispirited, and submissive, had lost all desire and even idea of their former liberty and independence.

BUT the period was now come, when that enormous fabric of the Roman empire, which had diffused slavery and oppression, together with peace and civility, over so considerable a part of the globe, was approaching towards its final dissolution. Italy, and the center of the empire, removed, during so many ages, from all concern in the wars, had entirely lost the military spirit, and were peopled by an enervated race, equally disposed to submit to a foreign yoke, or to the tyranny of their own rulers. The emperors found themselves obliged to recruit their legions from the frontier provinces, where the genius of war, though languishing, was not totally extinct; and these mercenary forces, careless of laws and civil institutions, established a military government, no less dangerous to the sovereign than to the people. The farther progress of the same disorders introduced the bordering barbarians into the service of the Romans; and those fierce nations, having now added discipline and skill to their native bravery, could no longer be restrained by the impotent policy of the emperors, who were accustomed to employ one in the destruction of the others. Sensible of their own force, and allured by the prospect of so rich a prize, the northern barbarians, in the reign of Arcadius and Honorius, assailed at once all the frontiers of the Roman empire; and having first satiated their avidity by plunder, began to think of fixing a settlement in the wasted provinces. The more distant barbarians, who occupied the deserted habitations of the former, advanced in their acquisitions, and pressed with their incumbent weight the Roman state, already unequal to the load which it sustained. Instead of arming the people in their own defence, the emperors recalled all the distant legions, in whom alone they could repose confidence; and collected the whole military force for the defence of the capital and center of the empire. The necessity of self-preservation had superseded the ambition of power; and the antient point

CHAP. point of honour, of never contracting the limits of the empire, could no longer be attended to in this desperate extremity.

I.

BRITAIN by its situation was removed from the fury of these barbarous incursions; and being also a remote province, not much valued by the Romans, the legions, which defended it, were carried over to the protection of Italy and Gaul. But that province, though secured by the sea against the inroads of the greater tribes of barbarians, found enemies on its frontiers, who took advantage of its present defenceless situation. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts, beyond the wall of Antoninus, made incursions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours; and besides the temporary depredations which they committed, these combined nations threatened the whole province with subjection, or, what the inhabitants more dreaded, with plunder and devastation. The former people seem to have been a tribe of the native British race, who, having been chased into the northern parts by the conquests of Agricola, had there intermingled with the antient inhabitants: The other were derived from the same Celtic origin, had first been established in Ireland, had sent over a colony to the north-west coast of this island, and had long been accustomed, as well from their old as their new seats, to infest the Roman province by their piracy and rapine. These tribes, finding their more opulent neighbours exposed to invasion, soon broke over the Roman wall, no longer defended by the Roman arms; and though a contemptible enemy in themselves, met with no resistance from the unwarlike inhabitants. The Britains, accustomed to have recourse to the emperors for defence as well as government, made supplications to Rome; and one legion was sent over for their protection. This force was an over-match for the barbarians, repelled their invasion, routed them in every engagement, and having chased them into their ancient limits, returned in triumph to the defence of the southern provinces of the empire^r. Their retreat brought on a new invasion of the enemy. The Britains made again an application to Rome, and obtained again the assistance of a legion, which proved effectual for their relief: But the Romans, reduced

^r Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 12. Paull. Diacon. Allured. Beverl. p. 43. ex edit. Hearne.

reduced to extremities at home, and fatigued with these distant expeditions, informed the Britains that they must no longer look to them for succour, exhorted them to arm in their own defence, and urged, that as they were now their own masters, it became them to protect by their valour that independence which their antient lords had conferred upon them. That they might leave the island with the better grace, the Romans assisted them in erecting anew the wall of Severus, which was built intirely of stone, and which the Britains had not at that time artizans skilful enough to repair. And having done this last good office to the inhabitants, they bid a final adieu to Britain, about the year 448; after being masters of the most considerable part of it during the course of near four centuries.

The BRITAINS.

THE abject Britains regarded this present of liberty as fatal to them; and were in no condition to put in practice the prudent counsel given them by the Romans, of arming in their own defence. Unaccustomed both to the perils of war, and to the cares of civil government, they found themselves incapable of forming or executing any measures for resisting the incursions of the barbarians. Gratian also and Constantine, two Romans who had a little before assumed the purple in Britain, had carried over into the continent the flower of the British youth; and having perished in their unsuccessful attempts on the imperial throne, had despoiled the island of those, who, in this desperate extremity, were best able to defend it. The Picts and Scots, finding that the Romans had finally relinquished Britain, now regarded the whole as their prize, and attacked the northern wall with redoubled forces. The Britains, already subdued by their own fears, found the ramparts but a weak defence for them; and deserting their station, left the country entirely open to the inroads of the barbarous enemy. The invaders carried devastation and ruin along with them; and exerted to the utmost their native ferocity, which was not mitigated by the helpless condition and submissive behaviour of

^Q Bede, lib. i. cap. 12. Gul. Malm. p. 8. Ann. Beverl. p. 44.
^R Bede, lib. i. cap. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 44.

CHAP. of the inhabitants^s. The unhappy Britains had a third
 I time recourse to Rome, which had declared its resolution
 for ever to abandon them. Ætius, the patrician, sustained, at that time, by his valour and magnanimity, the tottering ruins of the empire, and revived for a moment among the degenerate Romans the spirit, as well as discipline of their ancestors. The British ambassadors carried to him the letter of their countrymen, which was inscribed, *The Groans of the Britains*. The tenor of the epistle was suitable to its superscription. *The barbarians, say they, on the one hand, chase us into the sea; the sea, on the other, throws us back upon the barbarians; and we have only the hard choice left us, of perishing by the sword or by the waves*^T. But Ætius, pressed by the arms of Attila, the most terrible enemy that ever assailed the empire, had no leisure to attend to the complaints of allies, whom generosity alone could induce him to assist^U. The Britains, thus rejected, were reduced to despair, deserted their habitations, abandoned tillage, and flying for protection to the forests and mountains, suffered equally from hunger and from the enemy. The barbarians themselves began to feel the pressures of famine in a country which they had ravaged; and being harassed by the dispersed Britains, who had not dared to resist them in a body, they retreated with their spoils into their own country^W.

THE Britains, taking advantage of this interval, returned to their usual occupations; and the favourable seasons, which succeeded, seconding their industry, made them soon forget all their past miseries, and restored to them great plenty of all the necessaries of life. No more can be imagined to have been possessed by a people so rude, who had not, without the assistance of the Romans, art of masonry sufficient to raise a stone rampart for their own defence: Yet the Monkish historians^X, who treat of those events, complain of the luxury of the Britains during this period, and ascribe to this vice, not to their cowardice or improvident councils, all their subsequent calamities.

THE

^s Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45. ^T Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 13. Malnesbury, lib. 1. cap. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45. ^U Chron. Sax. p. 11. Edit. 1692. ^W Ann. Beverl. p. 45. ^X Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 14.

THE Britains, entirely occupied in the enjoyment of **CHAP. I.** the present interval of peace, made no provision for resisting the enemy, who, invited by their former timid behaviour, soon threatened them with a new invasion. We are not exactly informed what species of civil government the Romans on their departure had left among the Britains; but it appears probable, that the great men in the different districts assumed a kind of regal, though precarious authority; and lived in a great measure independent of each other^Y. To this disunion of councils were also added the disputes of theology; and the disciples of Pelagius, who was himself a native of Britain, having encreased to a great multitude, gave alarm to the clergy, who seem to have been more intent on resisting them, than on opposing the public enemy^Z. Labouring under these domestic evils, and menaced with a foreign invasion, the Britains attended only to the suggestions of their present fears; and following the council of Vortigern, prince of Dumnonium, who, though stained with every vice, possessed the chief authority among them^A, they sent into Germany a deputation to invite over the Saxons for their protection and assistance.

The SAXONS.

OF all the barbarous nations, known either in ancient or modern times, the Germans seem to have been the most distinguished both by their manners and political institutions, and to have carried to the highest pitch the virtues of valour and love of liberty; the only virtues which can have place among an uncivilized people, where justice and humanity are commonly neglected. Kingly government, even when established among the Germans, (for it was not universal) possessed a very limited authority; and though the sovereign was usually chosen from amongst the royal family, he was directed in every measure by the common consent of the nation, over whom he presided. When any important affairs were transacted, all the warriors met in arms; the men
of

^Y Gildas, Usher Ant. Brit. p. 248, 347. ^Z Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 17. Constant. in vita Germ. Matth. West. anno 446. H. Hunting. lib. 2. Ann. Beverl. 51. Spelm. Conc. p. 47, 48.

^A Gildas, Gul. Malm. p. 8.

CHAP. of greatest authority employed persuasion to engage their consent; the people expressed their approbation by rattling their armour, or their dissent by murmurs; there was no necessity for a nice scrutiny of votes among a multitude, who were usually carried with a strong current to one side or the other; and the measure, thus suddenly chosen by general agreement, was executed with alacrity, and prosecuted with vigour. Even in war, the princes governed more by example than by authority: but in peace, the civil union was in a great measure dissolved, and the inferior leaders administered justice, after an independent manner, each in his particular district. These were elected by the votes of the people in their great councils; and though regard was paid to nobility in the choice, their personal qualities, chiefly their valour, procured them from the suffrages of their fellow-citizens that honourable but dangerous distinction. The warriors of each tribe attached themselves to their leader, with the most devoted affection and most unshaken constancy. They attended him as an ornament in peace, as his defence in war, as his council in the administration of justice. Their constant emulation in military renown dissolved not that inviolable friendship which they professed to their chieftain and to each other. To die for the honour of their band was their chief ambition: To survive its disgrace, or the death of their leader, was infamous. They even carried into the field their women and children, who adopted all the martial sentiments of the men: And being thus impelled by every human motive, they were invincible; where they were not opposed, either by the similar manners and institutions of the neighbouring Germans, or by the superior discipline, arms, and numbers of the Romans^B.

THE leaders and their military companions were maintained by the labour of their slaves, or by that of the weaker and less warlike part of the community, whom they defended. The contributions, which they levied, went not beyond a bare subsistence; and the honours, acquired by a superior rank, were the only reward of their superior dangers and fatigues. All the refined arts of life were unknown among the Germans: tillage itself was almost wholly neglected: They seem to have been even
anxious

^B Cæsar, lib. 6. Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

anxious to prevent any improvements of that nature; and the leaders, by annually distributing anew all the land among the inhabitants of each village, prevented them from attaching themselves to particular possessions, or making any such progress in agriculture as might divert their attention from military expeditions, the chief occupation of the community ^c.

THE Saxons had been for some time regarded as one of the most warlike tribes of this fierce people, and had become the terror of the neighbouring nations ^d. They had diffused themselves from the northern parts of Germany and the Cimbrian Chersonesus, and had taken possession of all the sea-coast from the mouth of the Rhine to Jutland; whence they had long infested by their piracies all the eastern and southern parts of Britain, and northern of Gaul ^e. In order to oppose their inroads, the Romans had established an officer, whom they called *Count of the Saxon shore*; and as the naval arts can only flourish among a civilized people, they seem to have been more successful in repelling the Saxons than any of the other barbarians by whom they were invaded. The dissolution of the Roman power invited them to renew their inroads; and it was an acceptable circumstance, that the deputies of the Britains appeared among them, and prompted them to undertake an enterprize, to which they were of themselves sufficiently inclined ^f.

HENGIST and Horsa were two brothers, who possessed great credit among the Saxons, and were much celebrated both for their valour and nobility. They were reputed, as most of the Saxon princes, to be sprung from Woden, who was worshipped as a god among those nations, and they are said to be his great grandsons ^g; a circumstance which added much to their authority. We shall not attempt to trace any higher the origin of those princes and nations. It is evident what fruitless labour it must be to search in those barbarous and illiterate ages for the annals of a people, when their first leaders, known in any true history, were believed by them to be the fourth in descent from a fabulous deity, or from a man, exalted by

^c Cæsar, lib. 6. Tacit. *ibid.* ^d Amm. Marcell. lib. 28. Orosius. ^e Amm. Marcell. lib. 27. cap. 7. ^f Will. Malm. p. 8. ^g Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Saxon Chron. p. 13. Nennius, cap. 28.

CHAP. by ignorance into that character. The dark industry of
 I. antiquarians, led by fanciful analogies of names, or by uncertain traditions, would in vain attempt to pierce into that deep obscurity, which covers the remote history of those nations.

THESE two brothers, observing the other provinces of Germany to be occupied by a warlike and necessitous people, and the rich provinces of Gaul already conquered or over-run by other German tribes, found it easy to persuade their countrymen to embrace the sole enterprize, which promised a favourable opportunity of displaying their valour and gratifying their avidity. They embarked their troops in three vessels, and about the year 449 or 450^H, carried over 1600 men, who landed in the isle of Thanet, and immediately marched to the defence of the Britains against the northern invaders. The Scots and Picts were unable to resist the valour of these auxiliaries; and the Britains, applauding their own wisdom in calling over the Saxons, hoped thenceforth to enjoy peace and security under the powerful protection of that warlike people.

BUT Hengist and Horfa, perceiving from their easy victory over the Scots and Picts, with what facility they might subdue the Britains themselves, who had not been able to resist those feeble invaders, were determined to conquer and fight for their own grandeur, not for the defence of their degenerate allies. They sent intelligence to Saxony of the fertility and riches of Britain; and represented as certain the subjection of a people, so long refused to arms, who, being now cut off from the Roman empire, of which they were a province during so many ages, had not yet acquired any union among themselves, and were devoid of all affection to their new liberties, and of all national attachments and regards¹. The vices and pusillanimity of Vortigern, the British leader, were a new ground of hope; and the Saxons in Germany following such agreeable prospects, soon reinforced Hengist and Horfa with 5000 men, who came over in seventeen vessels. The Britains began now to entertain apprehensions of their allies, whose numbers they found continually augment-

^H Saxon Chronicle, p. 12. Gul. Malm. p. 11. Huntington, lib. 2. p. 309. Ethelwerd. Brompton, p. 728.

¹ Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 49.

augmenting; but thought of no remedy, except in a passive submission and connivance. This weak expedient soon failed them. The Saxons fought a quarrel by complaining that their subsidies were ill-paid, and their provisions withdrawn^K: And immediately taking off the mask, they formed an alliance with the Picts and Scots, and proceeded to open hostility against the Britains^L.

THE Britains, impelled by these violent extremities, and full of indignation against their treacherous auxiliaries, were necessitated to take arms; and having deposed Vortigern, who had become odious from his vices, and from the bad event of his rash councils, they put themselves under the command of his son, Vortimer^M. They fought many battles with their enemies; and though the victories in these actions be disputed between the British and Saxon annalists, the progress still made by the Saxons prove that the advantage was commonly on their side. In one battle, however, fought at Egesford, now Aisford, Horfa, the Saxon general, was slain; and left the sole command over his countrymen in the hands of Hengist^N. This active general, continually reinforced by fresh numbers from Germany, carried devastation into the most remote corners of Britain; and being chiefly anxious to spread the terror of his arms, he spared neither age, nor sex, nor condition, wherever he marched with his victorious forces. The private and public edifices of the Britains were reduced to ashes: The priests were slaughtered on the altars by those idolatrous ravagers: The bishops and nobility shared the fate of the vulgar: The people flying into the mountains and deserts, were intercepted and butchered in heaps: Some were glad to accept of life and servitude under their victors; others, deserting their native country, took shelter in the province of Armorica; where being charitably received by a people of the same language and manners, they settled in great numbers, and gave the country the name of Britanny^O.

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^K Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Nennius, cap. 35. Gidas, §. 23.

^L Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. ^M Gildas Saxon Chron. p. 12, 13. Ann. Beverl. p. 50. ^N Math. West. A. D. 454. Gul. Malm. p. 9. ^O Math. West. A. D. 455. Saxon Chron. p. 13. Nennius, cap. 46. ^P Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Usher. p. 226. Gildas, §. 24.

CHAP. I. THE British writers assign one cause, which facilitated the entrance of the Saxons into this island; the love, with which Vortigern was at first seized for Rowena, the daughter of Hengist, and which that artful warrior made use of to blind the eyes of the imprudent monarch^P. The same historians add, that Vortimer died; and Vortigern, being restored to the throne, accepted of a banquet from Hengist, at Stonehenge; where 300 of his nobility were treacherously slaughtered, and himself detained captive^Q. But these stories seem to have been invented by the Welsh authors, in order to palliate the weak resistance made at first by their countrymen, and to account for the progress and licentious devastations of the Saxons^R.

AFTER the death of Vortimer, Ambrosius, a Britain, tho' of Roman descent, was invested with the command over his countrymen, and endeavoured, not without success, to unite them in their resistance against the Saxons. These contests increased the animosity between the two nations, and roused the military spirit of the ancient inhabitants which had before been sunk into such a fatal lethargy. Hengist, however, notwithstanding their opposition, still kept his ground in Britain; and in order to divide the forces and attention of the Britains, he called over a new tribe of Saxons, under the command of his brother Oëta, and of Ebissa, the son of Oëta; and he settled them in Northumberland. He himself remained in the southern parts of the island, and laid the foundation of the kingdom of Kent, comprehending the county of that name, Middlesex, Essex, and part of Surry. He fixed his royal seat at Canterbury; where he governed about forty years, and he died in or near the year 488; leaving his new-acquired dominions to his posterity.

THE success of Hengist excited the avidity of the other northern Germans; and at different times, and under different leaders, they flocked over in multitudes to the invasion of this island. These conquerors were chiefly composed

^P Nennius, Galfr. lib. 6. cap. 12.

^Q Nennius, cap. 47. Galfr.

^R Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. p. 324, 325.

posed of three tribes, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes^s, who passed, all of them, under the common appellation, sometimes of Saxons, sometimes of Angles; and speaking the same language, and being governed by the same institutions, they were naturally led, from these causes, as well as from their common interest, to unite themselves against the ancient inhabitants. The resistance however, though unequal, was still maintained by the Britains; but became every day more feeble: And this misfortune admitted of few intervals, till they were driven into Cornwall and Wales, and received protection from the remote situation or inaccessible mountains of those countries.

THE first Saxon state, after that of Kent, which was established in Britain, was the kingdom of South-Saxony. In the year 477^T, Ælla, a Saxon chieftain, brought over an army from Germany; and landing on the southern coast, proceeded to take possession of the neighbouring territory. The Britains, now armed, abandoned not tamely their possessions; nor were they expelled, till defeated in many battles by their warlike invaders. The most memorable action, mentioned by historians, is that of Mearcrides-Burn^U; where, though the Saxons seem to have obtained the victory, they suffered so considerable a loss, as somewhat retarded the progress of their conquests. But Ælla, reinforced by fresh numbers of his countrymen, again took the field against the Britains; and laid siege to Andred-Ceaster, which was defended by the garrison and inhabitants with desperate valour^W. The Saxons, enraged by this resistance, and by the fatigues and dangers which they had sustained, redoubled their efforts against the place, and when masters of it, put all their enemies to the sword without distinction. This decisive advantage secured the conquests of Ælla, who assumed the name of king, and extended his dominion over Suffex and a great part of Surrey. He was stopped in his progress to the east by the kingdom of Kent: In that to

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^s Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Ethelwerd, p. 833. edit. Camdeni. Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 78. The inhabitants of Kent and the isle of Wight were Jutes. Essex, Middlesex, Surrey, and Suffex, and all the southern counties to Cornwall, were peopled by Saxons: Mercia and other part of the kingdom were inhabited by Angles. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 14. Ann. Beverl. p. 81. ^U Saxon. Chron. A. D. 485. Flor. Wigorn. ^W Hen. Huntin. lib. 2.

the west by another tribe of Saxons, who had taken possession of that territory.

THESE Saxons, from the situation of the country, in which they settled, were called the West-Saxons, and landed in the year 495, under the command of Cerdic, and of his son Kendric^x. The Britains were, by past experience, so much on their guard, and so well prepared to receive the enemy, that they gave battle to Cerdic the very day of his landing; and though vanquished, still defended, for some time, their liberties against the invaders. None of the other tribes of Saxons met with such vigorous resistance, or exerted such valour and perseverance in pushing their conquests. Cerdic was even obliged to call for the assistance of his countrymen from the kingdoms of Kent and Sussex, as well as from Germany, and he was thence joined by a fresh army under the command of Porte, and of his sons Bleda and Megla^y. Strengthened by these succours, he fought in the year 508 a desperate battle with the Britains, commanded by Nazan-Leod, their leader, who was victorious in the beginning of the action, and routed the wing in which Cerdic himself commanded. But Kenric, who had prevailed in the other wing, brought timely assistance to his father, and restored the battle, which ended in a complete victory on the side of the Saxons^z. Nazan-Leod perished with 5000 of his army: But left the Britains more weakened than discouraged by his death. The war still continued, though the success was commonly on the side of the Saxons, whose short swords and close manner of fighting, gave them great advantage over the missile weapons of the Britains. Cerdic was not wanting to his good fortune; and in order to extend his conquests, he laid siege to Mount Badon or Banefdowne near Bath, whither the most obstinate of the discomfited Britains had retired. The southern Britains in this extremity applied for assistance to Arthur, prince of the Silures, whose heroic valour now sustained the declining fate of his country^a. This is that Arthur so much celebrated by the songs of Thalieffin, and the other British bards, and whose military achievements have been blended with so many fables as to give occasion for entertaining
a doubt

^a Will. Malm. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 15.
^x Chron. Sax. p. 17. ^z H. Hunting. lib. 2. Ethelwerd, lib.
 1. Chron. Sax. p. 17. ^a Hunting. lib. 2.

a doubt of his real existence. But poets, though they disfigure the most certain history by their fictions, and use strange liberties with truth where they are the sole historians, as among the Britains, have commonly some foundation for their wildest exaggerations. Certain it is, that that the siege of Badon was raised by the Britains in the year 520, and the Saxons there discomfited in a great battle^B. This misfortune stopped the progress of Cerdic; but was not sufficient to wrest from him the conquest, which he had already made. He and his son, Kenric, who succeeded him, established the kingdom of the West-Saxons or of Wessex, over the counties of Hants, Dorset, Wilts, Berks, and the Isle of Wight, and left their new-acquired dominions to their posterity. Cerdic died in 534^C, Kenric in 560^D.

WHILE the Saxons made this progress in the south, their countrymen were not less active in other quarters. In the year 527^B, a great tribe of adventurers, under several leaders, landed on the east-coast of Britain; and after fighting many battles, of which history has preserved no particular account, they established three new kingdoms in this island. Uffa assumed the title of king of the East-Angles in 575; Crida that of Mercia in 585^E; and Erkenwin that of East-Saxony or Essex nearly about the same time; but the year is uncertain. This latter kingdom was dismembered from that of Kent, and comprehended Essex, Middlesex, and part of Hertfordshire. That of the East-Angles, the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk: Mercia was extended over all the middle counties, from the banks of the Severn, to the frontiers of these two kingdoms.

THE Saxons, soon after the landing of Hengist, had been planted in Northumberland; but meeting with an obstinate resistance, and making but small progress in subduing the inhabitants, their affairs were in so unsettled a condition, that none of their princes for a long time assumed the appellation of king. At last in 547^G, Ida, a Saxon prince of great merit^H, who claimed a descent, as did

^A Gildas, Saxon Chron. H. Hunting. lib. 2. ^C Will. Malm. Ethelwerd. H. Huntingdon, lib. 2. ^D H. Huntingdon, lib. 2. ^E H. Huntingdon, lib. 2. ^F Math. West. Huntingdon, lib. 2. ^G Chron. Sax. p. 19. ^H Will. Malmf. p. 19.

CHAP.

I.

did all the other princes of that nation, from Woden, brought over a reinforcement from Germany, and enabled the Northumbrians to carry on their conquests against the Britains. He entirely subdued the county, now called Northumberland, the bishopric of Durham, as well as some of the south-east counties of Scotland; and he assumed the crown under the title of King of Bernicia. Nearly about the same time, Ælla, another Saxon prince, having conquered Lancashire, and the greatest part of Yorkshire, received the appellation of King of Deiri¹. These two kingdoms were united in the person of Ethelfrid, grandson of Ida, who married Acca, the daughter of Ælla; and expelling her brother Edwin, established one of the most powerful of the Saxon kingdoms, under the title of Northumberland. How far his dominions extended into the country now called Scotland is uncertain; but it cannot be doubted, that all the lowlands, especially the east-coast of that country, were peopled in a great measure from Germany; though the expeditions, made by the several Saxon adventurers, have escaped the records of history. The language spoke in those countries, which is purely Saxon, is a stronger proof of this event, than can be opposed by the imperfect, or rather fabulous annals, which are obtruded on us by the Scots historians.

The HEPTARCHY.

THUS was established, after a violent contest of near a hundred and fifty years, the Heptarchy, or seven Saxon kingdoms, in Britain; and the whole southern part of the island, except Wales and Cornwall, had totally changed its inhabitants, language, customs, and political institutions. The Britains, under the Roman dominion, had made such advances towards arts and civil manners, that they had built twenty-eight considerable cities within their province, besides a great number of villages and country-seats^K; but the fierce conquerors, by whom they were now subdued, threw every thing back into ancient barbarity; and those few natives, who were not either massacred or expelled their habitations, were reduced to the most abject slavery. None of the other northern conquerors, the Franks, Goths, Vandals, or Burgundians,

¹ Ann, Beverl p. 78.^K Gildas. Bede, lib. 1.

Burgundians, though they over-ran the southern provinces, like a mighty torrent, made such devastations in the conquered territories, or were inflamed into such a violent animosity against the ancient inhabitants. As the Saxons came over at intervals in separate bodies, the Britains, however at first unwarlike, were tempted to make resistance; and hostilities, being thereby prolonged, proved more destructive to both parties, especially to the vanquished. The first invaders from Germany, instead of excluding other adventurers, who must share with them the spoils and property of the ancient inhabitants, were obliged to invite over fresh supplies from their own country; and a total extermination of the Britains became the sole expedient for providing a settlement and subsistence to the new planters. Hence there have been found in history few conquests more ruinous than that of the Saxons; and few revolutions more violent than that which they introduced.

So long as the contest was maintained with the natives, the several Saxon princes preserved an union of councils and interests; but after the Britains were shut up in the barren countries of Cornwall and Wales, and gave no farther inquietude to the conquerors, the band of alliance was in a great measure dissolved among the princes of the Heptarchy; and though one prince seems still to have been allowed, or to have assumed, an ascendant over the whole, his authority, if it ought ever to be deemed regular or legal, was extremely limited; and each state acted as if it had been totally separate, and independent of the rest. Wars, therefore, and revolutions and dissensions were unavoidable among a turbulent and military people; and these events, however intricate or confused, should now become the objects of our attention. But, added to the difficulty of carrying on at once the history of seven independent kingdoms, there is a great discouragement to a writer, arising from the uncertainty, at least barrenness, of the accounts transmitted to us. The Monks, who were the only annalists during those ages, lived remote from public affairs, considered the civil transactions as entirely subordinate to the ecclesiastical, and besides partaking of the ignorance and barbarity, which were then universal, were strongly infected with credulity, with the love of wonder, and with a propensity to imposture; vices almost inseparable from their profession, and manner of life.

CHAPTER I.

The history of that period abounds in names, but is extremely barren of events; or the events are related to much without circumstances and causes, that the most profound or most eloquent writer must despair of rendering them either instructive or entertaining to the reader. Even the great learning and vigorous imagination of Milton sunk under the weight; and this author scruples not to declare, that he esteems the skirmishes of kites or crows as much deserving a particular narrative, as the confused transactions and battles of the Saxon Heptarchy^L. In order, however, to connect the events in some tolerable measure, we shall give a succinct account of the successions of kings, and of the more remarkable revolutions in each particular kingdom; beginning with that of Kent, which was the first established.

The Kingdom of KENT.

PISCUS succeeded his father, Hengist, in the kingdom of Kent; but seems not to have possessed the military reputation enjoyed by that conqueror, who first made way for the entrance of the Saxon arms into Britain. All the Saxons, who sought the fame of valour, or new establishments by arms, flocked to the standard of Ælla, king of Sussex, who was carrying on successful war against the Britains, and laying the foundations of a new kingdom. Piscus was contented to possess in tranquillity the kingdom of Kent, which he left in 512 to his son Oeta, in whose time the East-Saxons established their monarchy, and dismembered the provinces of Essex and Middlesex from that of Kent. His death, after twenty-two years reign, made room for his son Hermenric in 534; who performed nothing memorable during a reign of thirty-two years; except associating with him his son, Ethelbert, in the government, in order the better to secure the succession in his family, and prevent such revolutions as are incident to a turbulent and barbarous monarchy.

ETHELBERT revived the reputation of his family, which had languished for some generations. The inactivity of his predecessors, and the situation of his country, secured from all hostility with the Britains, seem to have much weakened the warlike genius of the Kentish Saxons; and

^L Milton in Kennet, p. 50.

and Ethelbert, in his first attempt to aggrandize his country, and distinguish his own name, met with very bad success^M. He was twice discomfited in battle by Ceaulin, king of Wessex; and obliged to yield the superiority in the Heptarchy to that ambitious monarch, who preserved no moderation in his victory, and by subjecting the kingdom of Sussex, excited jealousy in all the other princes. An association was formed against him; and Ethelbert, entrusted with the command of the allies, fought him in a great battle, and obtained a decisive victory^N. Ceaulin died soon after; and Ethelbert succeeded as well to his ascendant among the Saxon states, as to his other ambitious and exorbitant projects. He reduced all the princes, except the king of Northumberland, to a strict dependence upon him; and even established himself by force on the throne of Mercia, the most extensive of the Saxon kingdoms. Apprehensive, however, of a dangerous league against him, like that by which he himself had been enabled to overthrow Ceaulin, he had the prudence to resign the throne of Mercia to Webba, the rightful heir, the son of Crida, who had first founded that monarchy. But governed still by ambition more than by justice, he gave Webba the possession of the crown on such conditions, as rendered him little better than a tributary prince under his artful benefactor.

BUT the most memorable and most fortunate event, which distinguished the reign of this great prince, was the introduction of the Christian religion among the English Saxons. The superstition of the Germans, particularly that of the Saxons, was of the grossest and most barbarous kind; and being founded on certain traditional tales, received from their ancestors, not reduced to any system, nor supported by political institutions, like that of the Druids, it seems to have made little impression on its votaries, and to have easily resigned its place to the new doctrine, promulgated to them. Woden, whom they believed the ancestor of all their princes, was regarded as the god of war, and, by a natural consequence, became their supreme deity, and the chief object of their religious worship. They believed, that, if they obtained the favour of this divinity by their valour, (for they made less account of the other virtues) they would be admitted af-
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^M Chron. Sax p. 21.^N H. Hunting. lib. 2.

CHAP. I. ter their death into his hall, and reposing on couches, would satiate themselves with ale from the skulls of their enemies, whom they had slain in battle. Incited by this idea of paradise, which gratified at once the passion of revenge and that of intemperance, the ruling inclinations of barbarians, they despised the dangers of war, and encreased their native ferocity against the vanquished by their religious prejudices. We know little of the other theological tenets of the Saxons: We only learn that they were idolaters; that they worshipped the sun and moon; that they adored the god of thunder, under the name of Thor: that they had images in their temples; that they practised sacrifices; believed firmly in spells and enchantments; and admitted in general a system of doctrines, which they held as sacred, but which, like all other superstitions, must bear the air of the wildest extravagance, if propounded to those who are not familiarized to it from their earliest infancy.

THE constant hostilities which the Saxons maintained against the Britains, would naturally indispose them for receiving the Christian faith, when preached to them by such inveterate enemies; and perhaps the Britains, as is objected to them by Gildas and Bede, were not overfond of communicating to their cruel invaders the doctrine of eternal life and salvation. But as a civilized people, however subdued by arms, still maintain a sensible superiority over barbarous and ignorant nations, all the other northern conquerors of Europe had been already induced to embrace the Christian faith, which they found established in the empire; and it was impossible but the Saxons, informed of this event, must have regarded with some degree of veneration a doctrine which had acquired the ascendancy over all their brethren. However limited in their views, they could not but have perceived a degree of cultivation in the southern countries beyond what they themselves possessed; and it was natural for them to yield to that superior knowledge, as well as zeal, by which the inhabitants of the Christian kingdoms were even at this time distinguished.

BUT these causes might long have failed of operating their effect, had not a favourable incident prepared the means of introducing Christianity into Kent. Ethelbert, in his father's lifetime, had married Bertha, the only daughter

daughter of Caribert, king of Paris^N, one of the de-
scendants of Clovis, the conqueror of Gaul; but before
he was admitted to this alliance, he was obliged to stipu-
late, that the princess should enjoy the free exercise of her
religion; a concession not difficult to be obtained from the
idolrous Saxons^O. Bertha brought over a French bi-
shop to the court of Canterbury; and being zealous for
the propagation of her religion, she had been very assidu-
ous in her devotional exercises, had supported the credit
of her faith by an irreproachable conduct, and had em-
ployed every art of insinuation and address to reconcile her
husband to her religious principles. Her popularity in the
court, and her influence over Ethelbert, had so well paved
the way for the reception of the Christian doctrine, that
Gregory, surnamed the Great, the present Roman pontiff,
began to entertain hopes of effectuating a project which
he himself, before he mounted the papal throne, had once
embraced for converting the British Saxons.

It happened, that this prelate, being then in a private
station, had observed in the market-plate of Rome some
Saxon youths exposed to sale, whom the Roman mer-
chants, in their trading voyages to Britain, had bought of
their mercenary parents. Struck with the beauty of their
fair complexions and blooming countenances, Gregory ask-
ed to what country they belonged; and being told they
were *Angles*, he replied, that they ought more properly
to be denominated *angels*; and it was a pity that the
Prince of Darkness should enjoy so fair a prey, and that
so beautiful a frontispiece should cover a mind devoid of
internal grace and righteousness. Enquiring farther con-
cerning the name of their province, he was informed that
it was *Deiri*, a division of Northumberland: *Deiri!* re-
plied he, *that is good! They are called to the mercy of God*
from his anger, De ira. But what is the name of the king
of that province? He was told it was *Aëlla* or *Alla*: *Al-*
lelujab, cried he: *We must endeavour that the praises of*
God be sung in their country. Moved by these allusions,
which appeared to him so happy, he determined to un-
dertake himself a mission into Britain; and having obtain-
ed the Pope's permission, he prepared for that dangerous
journey: But his popularity at home was so great, that
the

^N Greg. of Tours, lib. 9. cap. 26. H Hunting. lib. 2.

^O Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. Brompton, p. 729.

CHAP. the Romans, unwilling to expose him to such hazards, opposed his design; and he was obliged for the present to lay aside farther thoughts of executing that pious purpose^r.

THE controversy between the Pagans and the Christians was not entirely cooled in that age; and no pontiff before Gregory had ever carried to greater excesses an intemperate zeal against the former religion. He had waged war with all the precious monuments of the ancients, and even with their writings; which, as appears from the strain of his own wit, as well as the style of his compositions, he had not taste nor genius sufficient to comprehend. Ambitious to distinguish his pontificate by the conversion of the British Saxons, he pitched on Augustine, a Roman monk, and sent him with forty associates to preach the gospel in this island. These missionaries, terrified with the dangers, which might attend their proposing a new doctrine to so fierce a people, of whose language they were entirely ignorant, stopped some time in France, and sent back Augustine to lay the hazards and difficulties before the Pope, and crave his permission to desist from the undertaking. But Gregory exhorted them to persevere in their purpose, advised them to chuse some interpreters from among the Franks, who still spoke the same language with the Saxons^q, and recommended them to the good offices of Queen Brunehaut, who had at this time usurped the sovereign power in their country. This princess, though stained with every vice of treachery and cruelty, either possessed or pretended great zeal for the cause; and Gregory acknowledged, that to her friendly assistance was in a great measure owing the success of that undertaking^s.

AUGUSTINE, on his arrival in Kent in the year 597^s, found the danger much less than he had apprehended. Ethelbert, already well-disposed towards the Christian faith, assigned him a habitation in the isle of Thanet; and soon after admitted him to a conference. Apprehensive, however, that spells or enchantments might be employed against him by priests, who brought an unknown worship from

^r Bede, lib. 2. cap. 1. Spell. Conc. p. 91. ^q Bede, lib. 1. cap. 23. ^r Greg. Epist. lib. 9. epist. 56. Spell. Conc. p. 82. ^s Higden, Polychron. lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 23.

from a distant country, he had the precaution of receiving them in the open air, where he believed the force of their magic would be more easily dissipated^T. Here Augustine, by means of his interpreters, delivered to him the tenet of the Christian faith, and promised him eternal joys above, and a kingdom in heaven without end, if he would be persuaded to receive that salutary doctrine. “^V Your words and promises,” replied Ethelbert, “are fair; but because they are new and uncertain, I cannot entirely yield to them, and relinquish the principles, which I and my ancestors have so long maintained. You are welcome, however, to remain here in peace; and as you have undertaken so long a journey, solely, as it appears, for what you believe to be for our advantage, I will supply you with all necessaries, and permit you to deliver your doctrine to my subjects^X.”

AUGUSTINE, encouraged by this favourable reception, and seeing now a prospect of success, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the gospel to the Kentish Saxons. He attracted their attention by the austerity of his manners, by the severe penances to which he subjected himself, by the abstinence and self-denial which he practised: And having excited their wonder by a course of life, which appeared so contrary to nature, he procured more easily their belief for miracles, which, it was pretended, he wrought for their conversion^Y. Influenced by these motives, and by the declared favour of the court, numbers of the Kentish men were baptized; and the King himself was persuaded to submit to that rite of Christianity. His example wrought powerfully on his subjects; but he employed no force to bring them over to the new doctrine. Augustine thought proper, in the commencement of his mission, to assume the appearance of the greatest lenity; and he told Ethelbert, that the service of Christ must be entirely voluntary, and that no violence ought ever to be used in propagating so salutary a doctrine^Z.

THE intelligence received of these spiritual conquests conveyed great joy to the Romans; who now exulted as much

^T Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Huntingdon. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 729. Parker Antiq. Brit. Eccl. p. 61. ^V Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. Chron. W. Thorn. 1759. ^X Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Huntingdon. lib. 3. Brompton. p. 729. ^Y Bede, lib. 1. cap. 26. ^Z Bede, lib. 1. cap. 26. H. Hunting. lib. 3.

CHAP. I. much in those peaceful trophies, as their ancestors had ever done in their most sanguinary triumphs, and most splendid victories. Gregory wrote a letter to Ethelbert, in which, after informing him that the end of the world was approaching, he exhorted him to display his zeal in the conversion of his subjects, to exert rigour against the worship of idols, and to build up the good work of holiness by every expedient of exhortation, terror, blandishment or correction ^A: A doctrine more suitable to that age, and to the usual papal maxims, than the tolerating principles which Augustine had thought it prudent to inculcate. The pontiff also answered some questions, which the missionary had put concerning the government of the new church of England. Besides other queries, which it is not necessary here to relate, Augustine asked, *Whether cousin-germans might be allowed to marry?* Gregory answered, that that liberty had indeed been formerly granted by the Roman law; but that experience had shewn, that no posterity could ever come from such marriages; and he therefore prohibited them. Augustine asks, *Whether a woman pregnant might be baptized?* Gregory answers, that he sees no objection. *How soon after the birth the child might receive baptism?* It was answered, Immediately, if necessary. *How soon a husband might have commerce with his wife after her delivery?* Not till she had given suck to her child; a practice to which Gregory exhorts all women. *How soon a man might enter the church, or receive the sacrament, after having had commerce with his wife?* It was replied, that unless he had approached her without desire, merely for the sake of propagating his species, he was not free from sin; but in all cases it was requisite for him, before he entered the church, or communicated, to purge himself by prayer and ablution; and he ought not, even after using these precautions, to participate immediately of the sacred duties ^B. There are some other questions and replies still more indecent and more ridiculous ^C. And on the whole, it

^A Bede, lib. 1. cap. 32. Brompton. p. 732. Spell. Conc. p. 86.

^B Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27. Spell. Conc. p. 97, 98, 99, &c.

^C Augustine asks, *Si mulier menstrua consuetudine tenetur, an ecclesiam intrare ei licet, aut sacra communionis sacramenta percipere?* Gregory answers, *Sancta communionis mysterium*

it appears, that Gregory and his missionary, if sympathy of manners have any influence, were better calculated than men of more refined understandings, for making a progress with the ignorant and barbarous Saxons. CHAP. I.

THE more to facilitate the reception of Christianity, Gregory enjoined Augustine to remove the idols from the Heathen altars, but not to destroy the altars themselves; because the people, he said, would be allured to frequent the Christian worship, when they found it celebrated in a place, which they were accustomed to revere as sacred. And as the Pagans practised sacrifices, and feasted with the priests on their offerings, he also exhorted the missionary to persuade them, on Christian festivals, to kill their cattle in the neighbourhood of the church, and to indulge themselves in those cheerful entertainments to which they had been habituated ^D. These political compliances shew, that, notwithstanding his ignorance and prejudices, he was not unacquainted with the arts of governing mankind. Augustine was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, was endowed by Gregory with authority over all the British Churches, and received the pall, a badge of ecclesiastical honour, from Rome ^E. Gregory also advised him not to be too much elated with his gift of working miracles ^F; and as Augustine, proud of the success of his mission, seemed to think himself entitled to extend his authority over the bishops of Gaul, the Pope informed him, that they lay entirely without the bounds of his jurisdiction ^G.

THE marriage of Ethelbert with Bertha, and much more his embracing Christianity, begot a connexion of his subjects with the French, Italians, and other nations on the continent, and tended to reclaim them from that gross ignorance and barbarity, in which all the Saxon tribes

rium in eisdem diebus percipere non debet prohiberi. Si autem ex veneratione magna percipere non presumitur, laudanda est. Augustine asks, Si post illusionem, quæ per somnum solet accidere, vel, corpus Domini quilibet accipere valeat; vel, si sacerdos sit, sacra mysteria celebrare? Gregory answers this learned question by many learned distinctions.

^D Bede, lib. 1. cap. 30. Spell. Conc. p. 89. Greg. Epist. lib. 9. epist. 71. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 23, 24. ^F H. Hunting. lib. 3. Spell. Conc. p. 83. Bede, lib. 1. Greg. Epist. lib. 9. epist. 60. ^G Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27.

CHAP. I. tribes had been hitherto involved ^H. He also enacted ^I, with the consent of the states of his kingdom, a body of laws, the first written laws promulgated by any of the northern conquerors; and his reign was in every respect glorious to himself, and useful to his people. He governed the kingdom of Kent fifty years; and dying in 616 ^K, left the succession to his son, Eadbald. This prince, seduced by a passion for his mother-in-law ^L, deserted for some time the Christian faith, which permitted not these incestuous marriages; and his whole people immediately returned with him to idolatry. Laurentius, the successor of Augustine, found the Christian worship wholly abandoned, and was preparing to return into France, in order to save himself the mortification of preaching the gospel without fruit to the infidels. Mellitus and Justus, who had been consecrated bishops of London and Rochester, had already departed the kingdom ^M; when Laurentius, before he should entirely abandon his dignity, made one effort to reclaim the King. He appeared before that prince; and throwing off his vestment, shewed his body all torn with bruises and stripes, which he had received. Eadbald, wondering that any man should have dared to treat in that manner a person of his rank, was told by Laurentius, that he had received this chastisement from St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, who had appeared to him in a vision, and severely reproofing him for his intention to desert his charge, had inflicted on him these visible marks of his displeasure ^N. Whether Eadbald was struck with the miracle, or influenced by some other motive, he divorced himself from his mother-in-law, and returned to the profession of Christianity ^O: His whole people returned with him. Eadbald reached not the same nor authority of his father, and died in 640, after a reign of twenty-five years ^P; leaving two sons, Erminfrid and Ercombert.

ERCOMBERT, though the youngest son, by Emma, a French princess, found means to mount the throne. He is celebrated by Bede for two exploits, for establishing the faith

^H Will. Malm. p. 10. ^I Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 13.
^K Chron. Sax. p. 25. ^L Higden, lib. 9. H. Huntingdon.
 lib. 3. Chron. Sax. p. 26. ^M Bede, lib. 2. cap.
^N Bede, lib. 2. cap. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 26. Higden, lib. 5.
^O Brompton, p. 739.

fast of Lent in his kingdom, and for utterly extirpating idolatry ^Q, which, notwithstanding the prevalence of that papal Christianity preached to the Saxons, had hitherto been allowed a toleration by the two preceding monarchs. He reigned twenty-four years; and left the crown to Egbert, his son, who reigned nine years. This prince is renowned for his encouragement of learning; but infamous for putting to death his two cousin-germans, sons to Erminfrid, his uncle ^R. The ecclesiastical writers praise him for bestowing on his sister Domnona, some lands on the Isle of Thanet, where she founded a monastery.

THE bloody precaution of Egbert could not fix the crown on the head of his son, Edric. Lothaire, brother to the deceased prince, took possession of the kingdom; and in order to secure the power in his family, he associated with him Richard, his son, in the administration of the government. Edric, the dispossessed prince, had recourse to Edilwach, king of Suffex, for assistance in maintaining his right; and being supported by that prince, fought a battle with his uncle, who was defeated and slain. Richard fled into Germany, and died at last in Lucca, a city of Tuscany. William of Malmesbury ascribes Lothaire's bad fortune to two crimes, his concurrence in the murder of his cousins, and his contempt of reliques ^S.

LOTHAIRE reigned eleven years; Edric, his successor, only two. Upon the death of the latter, which happened in 686, Widred, his brother, obtained possession of the crown. But as the succession had been of late so much disjointed by revolutions and usurpations, faction began to prevail among the nobility; which invited Cedwalla, king of Wesssex, with his brother Mollo, to attack the kingdom. These invaders committed great devastations in Kent; but the death of Mollo, who was slain in a skirmish ^T, gave a short breathing-time to that kingdom. Widred restored the affairs of Kent: and after a reign of thirty-two years ^U, left the crown to his posterity. Eadbert, Ethelbert, and Alric, his descendants successively mounted the throne. After the death of the last,

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which

^Q Bede, lib. 3. cap. 8. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Chron. Sax.

^p 31. Ann. Beverl. p. 80.

^R Will. Malm. p. 11.

^S Will. Malm. p. 11.

^T Higden, lib. 5.

^U Chron. Sax.

p. 52.

CHAP. I. which happened in 794, the royal family of Kent was extinguished; and every factious leader, who could entertain hopes of ascending the throne, threw the state into confusion. ^x Egbert, who first succeeded, reigned but two years; Cuthred, brother to the king of Mercia, six years; Baldred, an illegitimate branch of the royal family eighteen: And after a troublesome and precarious government, he was, in the year 723, expelled by Egbert, king of Wessex, who dissolved the Saxon heptarchy, and united the several kingdoms under his dominion.

The Kingdom of NORTHUMBERLAND.

ADELFRID, king of Bernicia, having married Acca, the daughter of Ælla, king of Deiri, and expelled her infant brother, Edwin, had united all the counties north of Humber, into one monarchy, and acquired a great ascendant in the heptarchy. He also spread the terror of the Saxon arms to the neighbouring people; and by his victories over the Scots and Picts, as well as Welsh, extended on all sides the bounds of his dominions. Having laid siege to Chester, the Britains marched out with all their forces to engage him; and they were attended with a body of 1250 monks from the monastery of Bangor, who stood at a small distance from the field of battle, in order to encourage the combatants by their presence and exhortations. Adelfrid enquiring about the purpose of this unusual appearance, was told, that these priests had come to pray against him: *Then they are as much our enemies*, said he, *as those who intend to fight against us*. ^y And he immediately sent a detachment, who fell upon them, and did such execution, that only fifty escaped with their lives ^z. The Britains, astonished at this event, received a total defeat: Chester was obliged to surrender: And Adelfrid, pursuing his victory, made himself master of Bangor, and entirely demolished the monastery; a building so vast, that there was a mile's distance from one gate of it to another; and it contained two thousand one hundred monks, who are said to have been there maintained by the fruits of their own labour ^a.

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^x Will. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 11. ^y Brompton, p. 779. ^z Trivet. apud Spell. Conc. p. 111.
^a Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2. W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3.

NOTWITHSTANDING Adelfrid's success in war, he lived in inquietude on account of young Edwin, whom he had unjustly dispossessed of the crown of Deiri. This prince, now grown to man's estate, wandered from place to place, in continual danger from the attempts of Adelfrid; and received at last protection in the court of Redwald, king of the East-Angles; where his engaging and gallant deportment procured him the affections of every one. Redwald, however, was strongly solicited by the king of Northumberland to kill or deliver up his guest: Rich presents were promised him, if he would comply; and war denounced against him, in case of his refusal. After rejecting several messages of this kind, his generosity began to yield to the motives of interest; and he retained the last ambassador, till he should come to a resolution in a case of such importance. Edwin, informed of his friend's hesitation, was yet determined at all hazards to remain in East-Anglia; and thought, that if the protection of that court failed him, it were better to die than prolong a life so much exposed to the persecutions of his powerful rival. This confidence in Redwald's honour and friendship, with his other accomplishments, engaged the queen on his side; and she effectually represented to her husband the infamy of delivering up to certain destruction their royal guest, who had fled to them for protection, against his cruel and jealous enemies^B. Redwald, therefore, embracing more generous resolutions, thought it safest to prevent Adelfrid, before he was aware of his intention, and to attack him while he was yet unprepared for defence. He marched suddenly with an army into the kingdom of Northumberland, and fought a battle with Adelfrid; in which that monarch was defeated and killed, after revenging himself by the death of Regner, son to Redwald^C. His own sons, Eanfrid, Oswald, and Oswy, yet infants, were carried into Scotland; and Edwin obtained possession of the crown of Northumberland.

EDWIN was the greatest prince of the heptarchy during his time, and distinguished himself, both by his influence over the other kingdoms^D, and by the strict execution of justice in his own dominions. He reclaimed his sub-

D 2

jects

^B W. Walmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Bede.

^C Bede, lib. 2. cap. 12. Brompton, p. 781.

^D Chron. Sax. p. 27.

CHAP. I.jects from the licentious life to which they had been habituated; and it was a common saying, that in his reign a woman or child might openly carry every where a purse of gold, without any danger of violence or robbery^B. There is a remarkable instance, transmitted to us, of the affection borne him by his servants. Cuichelme, king of Wessex, was his enemy; and finding himself unable to maintain open war against so gallant and powerful a prince, he determined to make use of treachery against him, and he employed one Eumer for that criminal purpose. The assassin, having obtained admittance, by pretending to deliver a message from Cuichelme, drew his dagger, and rushed upon the king. Lilla, an officer of his army, seeing his master's danger, and having no other means of defence, interposed with his own body between the King and Eumer's dagger, which was pushed with such violence, that, after piercing Lilla, it even wounded Edwin: And before the assassin could renew his blow, he was dispatched by the guards^F.

THE East-Angles conspired against Redwald, their King; and having put him to death, they offered their crown to Edwin, of whose valour and capacity they had had experience, while he resided among them. But Edwin, from a sense of gratitude towards his benefactor, obliged them to submit to Earpwold, the son of Redwald; and that prince preserved his authority, tho' on a precarious footing, under the protection of the Northumbrian monarch^G.

EDWIN, after his accession to the crown, married Ethelburga, the daughter of Ethelbert, King of Kent; and this princess, emulating the glory of her mother Bertha, who had been the instrument of converting her husband and his people to Christianity, carried Paullinus, a learned bishop, along with her^H; and besides stipulating a toleration for the exercise of her own religion, which was readily granted her, she used every reason to persuade the King to embrace it. Edwin, like a prudent prince, hesitated on the proposal; but promised to examine the foundations of that doctrine; and if he found them satisfactory,

^B H. Hunting. lib. 2. Bede, W. Malmes. ^F Bede, lib. 1. cap. 9. Cron. Sax. p. 27. Higden, lib. 5. H. Hunting. lib. 3. ^G Gul. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. ^H H. Hunting. lib. 3.

story, he declared himself willing to be converted^I. Accordingly he held several conferences with Paullinus, canvassed the arguments propounded with the wisest of his counsellors, retired frequently from company, in order to revolve alone that important question; and, after a serious and long enquiry, declared in favour of the Christian religion^K. The people soon after imitated his example. Besides the authority and influence of the King, they were moved by another striking example. Coifi, the high-priest, being converted after a public conference with Paullinus, led the way in destroying the images, which he had so long worshipped, and was forward in making this atonement for his past idolatry^L.

THIS able prince perished with his son, Osfrid, in a great battle which he fought against Penda, king of Mercia, and Cædwalla, king of the Britains^M. That event, which happened in the forty-eighth year of Edwin's age and seventeenth of his reign^N, divided the monarchy of Northumberland, which he had united in his person. Eanfrid, the son of Adelfrid, returned with his brothers, Oswald and Oswy, from Scotland, and took possession of Bernicia, his paternal kingdom: Osric, Edwin's cousin-german, established himself in Deiri, the inheritance of his family; but to which the sons of Edwin had a preferable title. Eadfrid, the eldest surviving son, fled to Penda, by whom he was treacherously slain. The youngest son, Vulfscraea, with Yffi, the grandson of Edwin, by Osfrid, sought protection in Kent, and not finding themselves in safety there, retired into France to King Dagobert, where they died^O.

OSRIC, King of Deiri, and Eanfrid of Bernicia returned to Paganism; and the whole people seem to have returned with them; since Paullinus, who was consecrated first archbishop of York, and who had converted them, thought proper to retire with Ethelburga, the Queen Dowager, into Kent. Both these Northumbrian kings perished soon after, the first in battle against Cædwalla, the Britain; the second by the treachery of that prince. Oswald,

^I Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9. ^K Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 3. ^L Bede, lib. 2. cap. 13. Brompton, Higden, lib. 5. ^M Matth. West. p. 114. Chron. Sax. p. 29. ^N W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 3. ^O Bede, lib. 2. cap. 20.

CHAP. I. Oswald, the brother of Eanfrid, of the race of Bernicia, united again the kingdom of Northumberland in the year 634, and restored the christian religion in his dominions. He gained a great and well-disputed battle against Cædwalla; the last vigorous effort which the Britains made against the Saxons. Oswald is much celebrated for his sanctity and charity by the Monkish historians^P; and they pretend, that his reliques wrought miracles, particularly the curing a sick horse, which had approached the place of his interment^Q.

He died in battle against Penda, King of Mercia, and was succeeded by his brother, Oswy; who established himself in the government of all the Northumbrian kingdom, by putting to death Oswin, the son of Osric, the last king of the race of Deiri^R. His son Egrifid succeeded him; who perishing in battle against the Picts, without leaving any children, because Adelthrid, his wife refused to violate her vow of chastity^S, Alfred, his natural brother, acquired possession of the kingdom, which he happily governed for nineteen years; and he left it to Ofred, his son; a boy of eight years of age. This prince, after a reign of 11 years, was murdered by Kenred his kinsman^T, who, after enjoying the crown only a year, perished by a like fate. Osric, and after him Celwulph the son of Kenred, next mounted the throne, which the latter relinquished in the year 738, in favour of Eadbert his cousin-german, who imitating his predecessor, abdicated the crown, and retired into a monastery^U. Oswolf, son of Eadbert, was slain in a sedition, a year after his accession to the crown^X; and Moll, who was not of the royal family, seized the crown. He perished by the treachery of Ailred, a prince of the blood; and Ailred, having succeeded in his design upon the throne, was soon after expelled by his subjects^Y. Ethelfred, his successor, the son of Mollo, shared a like fate. Celwold, the next king, the brother of Ailfred, was deposed and slain by the people, and his place was filled by Ofred, his nephew, who, after the short reign of a year, made way for Ethelbert, another son of Mollo, whose

^P Matth. West. p. 115. Simeon Dunelm. cap. 2. Chron. Sax. p. 31. ^Q Bede, lib. 3, cap. 9. ^R W. Malmes. lib. 1, cap. 3. Matth. West. p. 118. ^S Bede, lib. 4, cap. 19. ^T W. Malmes. lib. 1, cap. 3. ^U Simeon Dunelm. lib. 2, cap. 1. 3. Chron. Sax. cap. 59. ^X Simeon Dunelm. lib. 2, cap. 4. ^Y Chron. Sax. p. 61.

whose death was equally tragical with that of almost all his predecessors. After Ethelbert's death an universal anarchy prevailed in Northumberland²; and the people, having, by so many fatal revolutions, lost all attachment to their government and princes, were well prepared for subjection to a foreign yoke; which Egbert, king of Wessex, finally imposed upon them.

The Kingdom of EAST-ANGLIA.

THE history of this kingdom contains nothing memorable, except the converting to christianity Earpwald, the fourth king and great-grandson of Uffa, the founder of the monarchy. The authority of Edwin, king of Northumberland, on whom that prince entirely depended, engaged him to take this step: But soon after, his wife, who was an idolatress, brought him back to her religion³; and he was found unable to resist those allurements, which have seduced the wisest of mankind. After his death, which was violent, like that of most of the Saxon princes, who did not early retire into monasteries, Sigebert, his successor and half-brother, who had been educated in France, restored christianity, and introduced learning among the Angles⁴. Some pretend that he founded the university of Cambridge, or rather some schools in that place. It is almost impossible, and quite needless to be more particular in relating the transactions of the East-Angles. What advantage or entertainment can it give the reader to hear a long bed-roll of barbarous names, Egric, Anna, Ethelbert, Ethelwald, Aldulf, Elfwald, Beorne, Ethelred, Ethelbert, who successively murdered, expelled, or inherited from each other, and obscurely filled the throne of that kingdom. Ethelbert, the last of these princes, was treacherously murdered by Offa, king of Mercia, in the year 792, and his state was thenceforth united with that of Offa, as we shall relate presently.

The

² W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 3. ³ Bede, lib. 2. cap. 15. Brompt. W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 5. H. of Huntingdon says it was Redwald who apostatized, lib. 3. ⁴ Bede, lib. 2. cap. 15. lib. 3. cap. 22.

The Kingdom of MERCIA.

MERCIA, the largest, if not the most powerful kingdom of the Heptarchy, comprehended all the middle counties of England; and as its frontiers extended to those of all the other six kingdoms, as well as to Wales, it received its name from that circumstance. Wibba, the son of Crida, founder of the monarchy, being placed on the throne by Ethelbert, king of Kent, governed his paternal dominions by a very precarious authority; and after his death, Ceorl, his kinsman, was, by the influence of the Kentish monarch, preferred to his son, Penda, whose turbulent disposition, appeared dangerous to that prince. Penda was thus fifty years of age before he mounted the throne; and his temerity and martial disposition were found nowise abated by time, experience, or reflection. He engaged in continual hostilities against all the neighbouring states; and, by his injustice and violence, rendered himself equally odious to his own subjects and to strangers. Sigebert, Egric, and Annas, three kings of East-Anglia, perished in battle against him; as did also Edwin and Oswald, the two greatest princes who had reigned over Northumberland^c. At last, Oswy, brother to Oswald, having defeated him in a great battle, freed the world from this sanguinary tyrant^d. Penda, his son, obtained the crown of Mercia in 655, and lived under the protection of Oswy, whose daughter he had espoused. This princess was educated in the christian faith, and she employed her influence with success, in converting her husband and his subjects to that religion^e. Thus the fair sex have had the merit of introducing the christian doctrine into all the most considerable kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy. Penda died a violent death^f. His son, Wolfhere, succeeded to the government; and after having

^c Higden, lib. 5. Brompton, p. 771. Ann. Beverl. p. 85.

^d Higden, lib. 5. W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 3. Flor. Witgorn. p. 560. ^e Bede, lib. 3. cap. 21. Brompton, p. 771. Higden, lib. 5. H. Huntingd. lib. 3. Simon. Deneham lib. 1. cap. 4. Ann. Beverl. p. 86. ^f Hugo Candidus, p. 14. says, that he was treacherously murdered by his queen, from whose persuasion he had embraced christianity; but this account of the matter is found in that historian alone.

having reduced to dependance the kingdoms of Essex, and East-Anglia, he left the crown to his brother, Ethelred, who, though a lover of peace, showed himself not unfit for military enterprizes. Besides making a successful expedition into Kent, he repulsed Egfrid, king of Northumberland, who had invaded his dominions; and he slew in battle Elfwin, the brother of that prince. Desirous, however, of composing all animosities with Egfrid, he paid him a sum of money, as a compensation for the loss of his brother. After a prosperous reign of thirty years, he resigned the crown to Kendred, son of Wolfhere, and retired into the monastery of Bardney^G. Kendred returned the present of the crown to Ceolred, the son of Ethelred; and making a pilgrimage to Rome, passed his life there in penance and devotion^H. The place of Ceolred was supplied by Ethelbald^I, great-grand nephew to Penda by Alwy, his brother; and this prince being slain in a mutiny, was succeeded by Offa, who was, a degree more remote from Penda, by Eawa, another brother.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in 755^K, had some great qualities, and was successful in his warlike enterprizes against Lothaire, king of Kent, and Kenwulph, king of Wessex. He defeated the former in a bloody battle at Otford upon the Darent, and reduced his kingdom to a state of dependance: He gained a victory over the latter at Bensington in Oxfordshire; and conquering that county, together with that of Gloucester, annexed it to his other dominions. But all these successes were stained by his treacherous murder of Ethelbert, king of the East-Angles, and his violent seizure of that kingdom. This young prince, who is said to have possessed great merit, had made suit to Elfrida, the daughter of Offa, and was invited with all his retinue to Hereford, in order to solemnize the nuptials. Amidst the joy and festivity of these entertainments, he was seized by Offa, and secretly beheaded: And though Elfrida, who abhorred her father's treachery, had time to give warning to the East-Anglian nobility, who had escaped into their own country, Offa, having extinguished the royal family, succeeded in his project of subduing that country^L. The treacherous prince,

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^G Bede, lib. 5. cap. 24.^H Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 4. Bede,

lib. 5. cap. 24.

^I Ingulph. p. 2.^K Chron. Sax. p. 59^L Brompton, p. 750, 751, 752.

CHAP. I. desirous of re-establishing his character in the world, and perhaps of appeasing the remorse of his own conscience, paid great court to the clergy, and practised all the monkish devotions, which were so much esteemed in that ignorant and superstitious age. He gave the tenth of all his goods to the church^M; bestowed rich donations on the cathedral of Hereford; and even made a pilgrimage to Rome, where his great power and riches could not fail of procuring him the papal absolution. The better to ingratiate himself with the sovereign pontiff, he engaged to pay him a yearly donation for the support of an English college at Rome^N, and in order to raise the sum, he imposed a tax of a penny on each house possessed of thirty pence a year. This imposition, being afterwards levied from all England, was commonly denominated Peter's pence^O; and though conferred at first as a gift, was afterwards claimed as a tribute by the Roman pontiff. Carrying his hypocrisy still farther, Offa, feigning to be directed by visions from heaven, discovered at Verulam, the relics of St. Alban, the martyr, and endowed a magnificent monastery in that place^P. Moved by all these acts of piety, Malmesbury, one of the best of the old English historians, declares himself at a loss to determine whether the merits or the crimes of this prince preponderated. Offa died, after a reign of thirty-nine years, in 794^R.

THIS prince was become so considerable in the Hephtharchy, that the Emperor Charlemagne entered into an alliance and friendship with him; a circumstance, which did him honour; as distant princes then had usually very little communication with each other. That emperor being a great lover of learning and learned men in an age which was very barren of that ornament, Offa, at his desire, sent him over Alcuin, a clergyman much celebrated for his knowledge, who received great honours from Charlemagne, and even became his preceptor in the sciences. The chief reason, why he had at first desired the company of Alcuin, was that he might oppose his learn-

^M Spell. Conc. p. 308. Brompton, p. 776. ^N Spell. Conc. p. 230, 310, 312. ^O Higden, lib. 5. ^P Ingulph. p. 5. W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 4. ^Q Lib. 1. cap. 4. ^R Chron. Sax. p. 65.

learning to the heresy of Felix, bishop of Urgel in Catalonia; who maintained, that Jesus Christ, considered in his human nature, could more properly be denominated the adoptive than the natural son of God^s. This heresy was condemned in the council of Francfort, held in 794, and consisting of 300 bishops. Such were the questions which were agitated in that age, and which employed the attention; not only of cloistered scholars, but of the wisest and greatest princes^t.

EGFRITM succeeded to his father, Offa, but survived him only five months^u; when he made way for Kenulph, a descendant of the royal family. This prince waged war against Kent; and taking Egbert, the king, prisoner, he cut off his hands, and put out his eyes; leaving Cuthred, his own brother, in possession of the crown of that kingdom. Kenulph was killed in an insurrection of the East-Anglians, whose crown his predecessor, Offa, had usurped. He left his son, Kenelm, a minor; who was murdered the same year by his sister, Quendrade, who had entertained the ambitious views of assuming the government^x. But she was supplanted by her uncle, Ceolulf; who, two years after was dethroned by Beornulf. The reign of this usurper, who was not of the royal family, was short and unfortunate: He was defeated by the West-Saxons, and killed by his own subjects, the East-Angles^y. Ludican, his successor, underwent the same fate^z; and Wiglaf, who mounted this unstable throne, and found every thing in the utmost confusion, could not withstand the fortune of Egbert, who united all the Saxon kingdoms into one great monarchy.

The Kingdom of E S S E X.

THIS kingdom made no great figure in the Heptarchy; and the history of it is very imperfect. Sleda succeeded his father, Erkenwin, the founder of the monarchy; and made way for his son, Sebert, who, being

^s Dupin, cent. 8. chap. 4. ^t Offa, in order to protect his country from Wales, drew a rampart or ditch of a hundred miles in length from Basingwerke in Flintshire to the South-sea, near Bristol. See *Speed's Description of Wales*. ^u Ingulph. p. 6. ^x Ingulph. p. 7. Brompton, p. 776. ^y Ingulph. p. 7. ^z Ann. Beverl. p. 87.

CHAP. ing nephew to Ethelbert, king of Kent, was persuaded by that prince to embrace the christian religion ^A. His sons and conjunct successors, Sexted and Seward, relapsed into idolatry, and were soon after slain in a battle against the West-Saxons. To shew the rude manner of living in that age, Bede tells us ^B, that these two kings expressed great desire to eat the white bread, distributed by Mellitus, the bishop, at the communion ^C. But on his refusing them, unless they would submit to be baptized, they expelled him their dominions. The names of the other princes, who reigned successively in Essex, are Sigebert the little, Sigebert the good, who restored christianity, Swithelm, Sigheri, Offa. This last prince, having made a vow of chastity, notwithstanding his marriage with Keneswitha, a Mercian princess, daughter to Penda, went in pilgrimage to Rome, and shut himself up during the rest of his life in a cloyster. Selred, his successor, reigned thirty-eight years; and was the last of the royal line: The failure of which threw the kingdom into great confusion, and reduced it to dependance under Mercia ^D. Switherd first acquired the crown, and his death made way for Sigeric, who ended his life in a pilgrimage to Rome. His successor, Sigered, unable to defend his kingdom, submitted to the victorious arms of Egbert.

The Kingdom of S U S S E X.

THE history of this kingdom, the smallest in the Heph-tarchy, is still more imperfect than that of Essex. Ælla, the founder of the monarchy, left the crown to his son, Cissa, who is remarkable chiefly for his long reign of seventy-six years. During his time, the South-Saxons fell almost into a total dependance on the kingdom of Wessex; and we scarce know the names of the princes, who were possessed of this titular sovereignty. Adelwalch, the last of them, was subdued in battle by Ceadwalla, king of Wessex, and was slain in the action; leaving two infant sons, who, falling into the hand of the conqueror, were murdered by him. The abbot to Redford opposed

^A Chron. Sax. p. 24.
ing. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 738, 743. Bede.
1. cap. 6.

^B Lib. 2. cap. 5.

^C H. Hunting.

^D Malmesb. lib.

sed the order for this barbarous execution; but could prevail on Ceadwalla only to suspend it, till they should be baptized. Berethun and Audhun, two noblemen of character, resisted some time the dominion of the West-Saxons; but their opposition served only to prolong the miseries of their country; and the subduing this kingdom, was the first step, which the West-Saxons made towards acquiring the sole monarchy of England^E.

The Kingdom of W E S S E X.

THE kingdom of Wessex, which finally swallowed up all the other Saxon states, met with great resistance on its first establishment; and the Britains, who were now enured to arms, yielded not tamely their possessions to these invaders. Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, and his son, Kenric, fought many successful, and some unsuccessful battles, against the natives; and the martial spirit, common to all the Saxons, was, by means of these hostilities, carried to the greatest height among this tribe. Ceaulin, the son and successor of Kenric, who began his reign in 560, was still more ambitious and enterprizing than his predecessors; and by waging continual war against the Britains, he added a great part of the counties of Devon and Somerset to his other dominions. Carried away by the tide of success, he invaded the other Saxon states in his neighbourhood, and becoming terrible to all, he provoked a general confederacy against him. This alliance proved successful under the conduct of Ethelbert, king of Kent; and Ceaulin, who had lost the affections of his own subjects by his violent disposition, and had now fallen into contempt from his misfortunes, was expelled the throne^F, and died in exile and misery. Cuichelme and Cuthwin, his sons, governed jointly the kingdom, till the expulsion of the latter in 591, and the death of the former in 593, made way for Cealric, to whom succeeded Ceobald in 593, by whose death, which happened in 611, Kynegils inherited the crown. This prince embraced christianity^G, through the persuasion of Oswald, king of Northumberland, who had married his daughter, and who had attained a great ascendant in the heptarchy.

^E Brompton, p. 800. ^F Chron. Sax. p. 22. ^G Higden, lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 15. Ann. Beverl. p. 94.

CHAP. heptarchy. Kenwalch next succeeded to the monarchy, and dying in 672, left the succession so much disputed, that Sexburga, his widow, a woman of merit^H, kept possession of the government till her death, which happened two years after. Eswin then peaceably acquired the crown; and, after a short reign of two years, made way for Kentwin, who governed nine years. Ceodwalla, his successor, mounted not the throne without opposition; but proved a great prince, according to the ideas of those times; that is, he was enterprising, warlike, and successful. He subdued entirely the kingdom of Suffex, and annexed it to his own dominions. He made deep impressions upon Kent; but met with resistance from Widred, the king, who proved successful against Mollo, brother to Ceodwalla, and slew him in a skirmish^I. Ceodwalla at last, tired with wars and bloodshed, was seized with a fit of devotion; bestowed several endowments on the church, and made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he received baptism, and died in 689^K. Ina, his successor, inherited the military virtues of Ceodwalla, and added to them the more valuable ones of justice, policy, and prudence^L. He made war upon the Britains in Somerset; and having finally subdued that province, he treated the vanquished with an humanity, hitherto unknown to the Saxon conquerors. He allowed the proprietors to retain possession of their lands^M, encouraged marriages and alliances between them and his antient subjects^N, and gave them the privilege of being governed by the same laws. These laws he augmented and ascertained^O; and though he was disturbed by some insurrections at home, his long reign of thirty-seven years may be regarded as one of the most glorious and most prosperous of the heptarchy. In the decline of his age, he made a pilgrimage to Rome; and after his return, he shut himself up in a cloyster, where he died^P.

THOUGH

^H Bede, lib. 4. cap. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 41. ^I H. Hunting. lib. 4. Brompton, p. 757. ^K Bede, lib. 5. cap. 7. W. Malmesf. lib. 1. cap. 2. Ethelwerd, lib. 2. cap. 10. M. West. p. 128. Chron. Sax. p. 46. ^L W. Malmesf. lib. 1. cap. 2. ^M Vita Adelhelm, p. 32. See also LL. Inz. §. 24. Wilkins, p. 18. ^N Concil. Mag. Brit. tom. 1. p. 74. ^O Wilkins, p. 14. ^P Bede, lib. 5. cap. 7. Chron. Sax. p. 52. Higden, lib. 5. W. Malm. lib. 1. cap. 2. H. Hunting. lib. 4. M. West. p. 135.

THOUGH the kings of Wessex had always been princes of the blood, descended from Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, the order of succession had been far from exact; and a more remote prince had often found means to mount the throne, in preference to one descended from a nearer branch of the royal family. Ina, therefore, having no children of his own, and lying much under the influence of Ethelburga, his Queen, left by will the succession to Adelard, her brother, who was his remote kinsman ^Q. But this destination took not place without some difficulty. Oswald, a prince more nearly allied to the crown, took arms against Adelard ^R; but he being suppressed, and dying soon after, the title of Adelard was not any farther disputed; and in the year 741, he was succeeded by his cousin, Cudred ^S. The reign of this prince was distinguished by a great victory, which he obtained, by the means of Edelhun, his general, over Ethelbald, king of Mercia ^T. His death made way for Sigebert, his kinsman, who governed so ill, that his people rose in an insurrection, and dethroned him ^U, crowning Cenulph in his stead. The exiled prince found a refuge with duke Cumbran, governor of Hampshire; who, that he might add to his other kindness towards Sigebert, gave him many salutary counsels for his future conduct, accompanied with some reprehensions for the past. But these were so much resented by the ungrateful prince, that he conspired against the life of his protector, and treacherously murdered him. After this infamous action, he was forsaken by every body; and skulking about in the wilds and forests, was at last discovered by a servant of Cumbran, who instantly took revenge upon him for the death of his master ^X.

CENULPH, who had obtained the crown on the expulsion of Sigebert, was fortunate in many expeditions against the Britains of Cornwall; but afterwards lost some reputation by his ill success against Offa, king of Mercia ^V. Kynehard also, brother to the deposed Sigebert, gave him disturbance; and though expelled the kingdom, he hovered

^Q W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 2.

^R Brompton. p. 768.

^S Chron. Sax. p. 55.

^T Brompton, p. 769. Chron. Sax.

p. 56.

^U W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 2. Brompton, p. 770.

Chron. Sax. p. 56.

^X Higden, lib. 5. W. Malmesb. lib. 1.

cap. 2.

^Y W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 2.

CHAP.

I.

vered on the frontiers, and waited an opportunity of attacking his rival. The King had an intrigue with a young woman, who lived at Merton in Surrey^z; whither having secretly retired, he was on a sudden invironed, in the night-time, by Kynehard and his followers, and after making a vigorous resistance, was murdered, with all his attendants. The people and nobility of the neighbourhood, rising next day in arms, took revenge on Kynehard for the slaughter of their King, and put every one to the sword, who had been engaged in that criminal enterprise^A. This event happened in 784.

BRITHRIC next obtained possession of the government, tho' very remotely descended from the royal family; but enjoyed not that dignity without iniquitude. Eoppa, nephew to King Ina, by his brother Ingild, who died before that prince, begot Eata, father to Alchmond, from whom sprung Egbert^B, a young prince of the most promising hopes, who gave great jealousy to Brithric, the present King, both because he seemed by his birth better intitled to the crown, and because he had acquired, to an eminent degree, the affections of the people. Egbert, sensible of his danger from the suspicions of Brithric, withdrew secretly into France^C; where he was well received by Charlemagne, the reigning monarch. By living in the court, and serving in the armies of that prince, the most able and most generous who had appeared in Europe during several ages, he acquired those accomplishments which afterwards enabled him to make such a shining figure on the throne. And familiarizing himself to the manners of the French, who, as Malmesbury observes^D, were eminent both for valour and civility, above all the western nations, he learned to polish the rudeness and barbarity of the Saxon character: His early misfortunes proved thus of infinite advantage to him.

It was not long before Egbert had opportunities of displaying his natural and acquired talents. Brithric, King of Wessex, had married Eadburga, natural daughter^E of Offa, king of Mercia, a profligate woman, equally infamous for cruelty and for incontinence. Having great influence

^z Flor Wigorn. p. 576. Chron. Sax. p. 57, 63. ^A Flor. Wigorn. p. 576. Hoveden. p. 409. ^B Chron. Sax. p. 16.
^C H. Hunting lib 4. ^D Lib. 2. cap. 11. ^E Brompton, p. 740, 750. W. Malmesb. lib. 1. cap. 2. H. Hunting. lib. 4.

fluence over her husband, she often incited him to destroy such of the nobility as were obnoxious to her; and where this expedient failed, she scrupled not being herself active in traiterous attempts against them. She had mixed a cup of poison for a young nobleman, who had acquired her husband's friendship, and had on that account become the object of her jealousy: But unfortunately, the King drank of the fatal cup along with his favourite, and soon after expired ^F. This event, joined to her other crimes, rendered Eadburga so odious, that she was obliged to fly into France; whence Egbert was at the same time recalled by the nobility, in order to ascend the throne of his ancestors ^G. He attained that dignity in the last year of the eighth century.

IN the kingdoms of the heptarchy, an exact rule of succession was either unknown or not strictly observed; and thence the reigning prince was continually agitated with jealousy against all the princes of the blood, whom he still considered as rivals, and whose death alone could give him entire security in his possession of the throne. From this fatal cause, together with the admiration of the monastic life, and the opinion of merit, attending the preservation of chastity even in a married state, the royal families had been entirely extinguished in all the kingdoms except that of Wessex; and the emulations, suspicions, and conspiracies, which had formerly been confined to the princes of the blood alone, were now diffused among all the nobility in the several Saxon states. Egbert was the sole descendant of those first conquerors who subdued Britain, and who enhanced their authority by claiming a pedigree from Woden, the supreme divinity of their ancestors. But that prince, tho' invited by this favourable circumstance to make attempts on the neighbouring Saxons, gave them for some time no disturbance, and rather chose to turn his arms against the Britains in Cornwall, whom he defeated in several battles ^H. He was recalled from the conquest of that country by an inroad made into his dominions by Bernulf, king of Mercia.

THE Mercians, before the accession of Egbert, had very nearly attained the absolute sovereignty over the heptarchy:

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tarchy:

^F Higden, lib. 5. M. West. p. 152. Asser. in vita Alfredi, p. 3. ex edit. Camdeni. ^G Chron. Sax. A. D. 800. Brompton, p. 801. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 69.

CHAP. tarchy: They had reduced the East-Angles under sub-
 I. jection, and established tributary princes in the kingdoms
 of Kent and Essex. Northumberland was involved in anarchy; and no state of any consequence remained but that of Wessex, which, much inferior in extent to Mercia, was supported by the great qualities alone of its sovereign. Egbert led his army against the invaders; and encountering them at Ellandun in Wiltshire, obtained a complete victory, and by the slaughter executed on them in their flight, gave a mortal blow to the power of the Mercians. Whilst he himself, in prosecution of his victory, entered their country on the side of Oxfordshire, and threatened the heart of their dominions; he sent an army into Kent, commanded by Ethelwolph, his eldest son^I; and expelling Baldred, the tributary king, soon made himself master of that country. The kingdom of Essex was conquered with equal facility; and the East-Angles, from their hatred to the Mercian government, which had been established over them by treachery and violence, and probably exercised with tyranny, immediately rose in arms, and craved the protection of Egbert^K. Bernulf, the Mercian king, who marched against them, was defeated and slain; and two years after, Luðecan, his successor, met with the same fate. These insurrections and calamities facilitated the enterprizes of Egbert, who advanced into the heart of the Mercian territories, and made easy conquests over a dispirited and divided people. In order to engage them more easily to submission, he allowed Wiglaf, their countryman, to retain the title of King, whilst he himself exercised the real powers of sovereignty^L. The anarchy, which prevailed in Northumberland, tempted him to carry still farther his victorious arms; and the inhabitants, unable to resist his power, and desirous of possessing some established form of government, were forward, on his first appearance, to send deputies, who submitted to his authority, and expressed their allegiance to him as their sovereign. Egbert, however, still allowed to Northumberland, as he had done to Mercia and East-Anglia, the power of electing a king, who paid him a tribute, and was dependant on him.

THUS.

^I Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 2.
^L Ingulph. p. 7, 8, 10.

^K Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap.

THUS were united all the kingdoms of the heptarchy in one great state, near four hundred years after the first arrival of the Saxons in Britain; and the fortunate arms and prudent policy of Egbert at last effectuated what had been so often attempted in vain by so many princes^M. Kent, Northumberland, and Mercia, which had successively aspired to general dominion, were now incorporated in his empire; and the other subordinate kingdoms seemed willingly to share the same fate. His territories were nearly of the same extent with what is now properly denominated England; and a favourable prospect was afforded the Anglo-Saxons, of establishing a civilized monarchy, possessed of tranquillity within itself, and secure against foreign invasion. This great event happened in the year 827^N.

THE Saxons, though they had been so long settled in the island, seem not as yet to have been much improved beyond their German ancestors, either in arts, civility, knowledge, humanity, justice, or obedience to the laws. Even Christianity, though, among other advantages, it opened the way to connexions between them and the more polished states of Europe, had not hitherto been very effectual, in banishing their ignorance, or softening their barbarous manners. As they received that doctrine through the corrupted channels of Rome, which had strongly tinged the original purity of the Christian faith, it carried along with it a great mixture of credulity and superstition, equally destructive to the understanding and to morals. The reverence towards saints and reliques seems to have almost supplanted the adoration of the supreme Being: Monastic observances were esteemed more meritorious than the active virtues: The knowledge of natural causes was neglected from the universal belief of miraculous interpositions and judgments: Bounty to the church atoned for all violences against society: And the remorse for cruelty, murder, treachery, assassination, and the more robust vices, were appeased, not by amendment of life, but by penances, servility to the monks, and an abject and illiberal devotion^O. The reverence for

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the

^M Chron. Sax. p. 71. ^N Ibid. ^O These abuses were common to all the European churches; but the priests in Italy, Spain, and Gaul, made some atonement for them by other advantages,

CHAP. the clergy had mounted so high, that wherever a person
 I. appeared in a sacerdotal habit, though on the high-way,
 the people flocked around him; and showing him all
 marks of profound respect, received every word he uttered
 as the most sacred oracles^P. Even the military virtues,
 so inherent in all the Saxon tribes, began to be neglected;
 and the nobility, preferring the security and sloth of the
 cloyster to the tumults and glory of war, valued themselves
 chiefly on the endowment of monasteries, of which they
 assumed the government^Q. The several kings too, being
 extremely impoverished by continual benefactions to the
 church, to which the states of the kingdom weakly
 consented, could bestow no rewards on valour or military
 services, and retained not even sufficient influence to
 support their government^R.

ANOTHER inconvenience, which attended this corrupt
 species of Christianity, was the superstitious attachment
 to Rome, and the gradual subjection of the kingdom to
 a foreign jurisdiction. The Britains had never acknowledged
 any subordination to the Roman pontiff, and had conducted
 all ecclesiastical government by their domestic synods and
 councils^S: But the Saxons, receiving their religion from
 Roman monks, were taught at the same time a profound
 reverence to that see, and were naturally led to regard it
 as the capital of their religion. Pilgrimages to Rome were
 represented as the most meritorious acts of devotion.
 Not only noblemen and ladies of rank undertook this
 tedious journey^T; but kings themselves, abdicating their
 crowns, sought for a secure passport to heaven at the
 feet of the Roman pontiff. New reliques, continually sent
 from that mint of superstition, and magnified by lying
 miracles, invented in convents, operated on the
 astonished minds of the multitude. And every

advantages, which they rendered society. For several ages,
 they were almost all Romans, or, in other words, the
 antient natives; and they preserved the Roman language
 and laws, with some remains of the former civility.
 But the priests in the heptarchy, after the first
 missionaries, were wholly Saxons, and almost as
 ignorant and barbarous as the laity. They contributed,
 therefore, little to the improvement of the society in
 knowledge or the arts.
^P Bede, lib. 3. cap. 26. ^Q Bede, lib. 5.
 cap. 23. Epistola Bedæ ad Egbert. ^R Bedæ Epist. ad
 Egbert. ^S Append. to Bede, numb. 10. ex. edit. 1722. Spelm.
 Conc. p. 108, 109. ^T Bede, lib. 5. cap. 7.

every prince obtained the eulogies of the monks, the only historians of those ages, not in proportion to his civil and military virtues, but to his devoted attachment towards their order, and his superstitious reverence for Rome.

THE sovereign pontiff, encouraged by this blindness and submissive disposition of the people, advanced every day in his enterprizes on the independence of the English churches. Wilfrid, bishop of Lindisferne, the sole prelate of the Northumbrian kingdom, gave the finishing stroke to this subjection in the eighth century, by his making an appeal to Rome against the decisions of an English synod, which had abridged his diocese by the erection of some new bishoprics^u. Agatho, the pope, readily embraced this precedent of an appeal to his court; and Wilfrid, though the haughtiest and most luxurious prelate of his age^x, having obtained with the people the character of sanctity, finally prevailed in the contest.

THE great topic, by which Wilfrid confounded the imaginations of men, was, that St. Peter, to whose custody the keys of heaven were entrusted, would certainly refuse admittance to every one who had been wanting in respect to his successor. This conceit, well calculated for vulgar conceptions, had a powerful operation on the people during several ages; and has not even at present lost all influence in the catholic countries.

HAD this abject superstition produced general peace and tranquillity, it had made some atonement for the ills attending it; but, added to the usual avidity of men for power and riches, it engendered frivolous controversies in theology, which were so much the more fatal, as they admitted not, like others, of any final determination from established possession. The disputes, excited in Britain, were of the most ridiculous kind, and entirely worthy of those ignorant and barbarous ages. There were some intricacies, observed by all the Christian churches, in adjusting the day of keeping Easter; which depended on a complicated consideration of the course of the sun and moon: And it happened that the missionaries, who had converted the Scots and Britains, had followed a different calendar from what was observed at Rome, in the age when Augustine converted the Saxons. The priests
also

^u See Appendix to Bede, numb. 19. Higden, lib. 5. Matth. West. p. 124. Brompton, p. 793, 794. ^x Eddius vita Vilfr. §. 24, 60.

CHAP. also of all the Christian churches were accustomed to shave part of their head; but the form given to this tonsure, was different in the former from what was practised in the latter. The Scots and Britains pleaded the antiquity of *their* usages: The Romans, and their disciples, the Saxons, insisted on the universality of *theirs*. That Easter must necessarily be kept by a rule, which comprehended both the day of the year and age of the moon, was agreed by all; that the shaving of a priest could not be omitted without the utmost impiety, was a point undisputed: But the Romans and Saxons called their antagonists schismatics; because they celebrated Easter on the very day of the full moon in March, if that day fell on a Sunday, instead of waiting till the Sunday following; and because they shaved their whole forehead from ear to ear, instead of making that tonsure on the crown of the head, and in a circular form. In order to render their antagonists odious, they affirmed, that once in seven years they concurred with the Jews in the time of celebrating that festival^Y: And that they might recommend their own form of tonsure, they maintained, that it imitated symbolically the crown of thorns worn by our Saviour in his passion; whereas the latter was invented by Simon Magnus, without any regard to that representation^Z. These controversies had from the beginning excited such animosity between the British and Roman priests, that, instead of concurring in their endeavours to convert the idolatrous Saxons, they refused all communion together, and each regarded his opponent as no better than a Pagan^A. The dispute lasted more than a century; and was at last finished, not by men perceiving the folly of it, which would have been too great an effort for human reason to accomplish, but by the entire victory of the Romish ritual over the Scots and British^B. Wilfred, bishop of Lindsferne, acquired great merit, both with the court of Rome and with all the southern Saxons, by expelling the quartodeciman schism, as it was called, from the Northumbrian kingdom, into which the neighbourhood of the Scots had formerly introduced it^C.

THEODORE

^Y Bede, lib. 2. cap. 19. ^Z Bede, lib. 5. cap. 21. Eddius, §. 24. ^A Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2, 4, 20. Eddius, §. 12. ^B Bede, lib. 3. cap. 16, 22. ^C Bede, lib. 3. cap. 25. Eddius, §. 12.

THEODORE, archbishop of Canterbury, called, in the year 680, a synod at Hatfield, consisting of all the bishops in Britain^D; where was accepted and ratified the decree of the Lateran council, summoned by Martin the first, against the heresy of the Monothelites. The council and synod maintained, in opposition to these heretics, that though the divine and human nature in Christ made but one person; yet had they still different inclinations, wills, acts, and sentiments, and that the unity of the person implied not any unity in the consciousness^E. This opinion it seems somewhat difficult to comprehend; and no one, unacquainted with the ecclesiastical history of those ages, could imagine the height of zeal and violence with which it was then inculcated. The decree of the Lateran council calls the Monothelites impious, execrable, wicked, abominable, and even diabolical; and curses and anathematizes them to all eternity^F.

THE Saxons, from the first introduction of Christianity among them, had admitted the use of images; and perhaps, Christianity, without some of those exterior ornaments, had not made so quick a progress with these idolaters: But they had not paid any species of worship or address to images; and this abuse never prevailed among Christians, till it received the sanction of the second council of Nice.

CHAP.

^D Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 168. ^E Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 171. ^F Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 172, 173, 174.

C H A P. II.

*Egbert—Esbelwolf—Esbelbald and Esbelbert—Esbelred
—Alfred the Great—Edward the elder—Atbel-
stan—Edmund—Edred—Edwy—Edgar—
Edward the Martyr.*

E G B E R T.

C H A P.

II.

827.

THE Kingdoms of the Heptarchy, though united by so recent a conquest, seemed to be firmly cemented into one state under Egbert; and the inhabitants of the several provinces had lost all desire of revolting from that conqueror, or of restoring their independent governments. Their language was every where nearly the same; their customs, laws, institutions civil and religious; and as the race of the antient kings was totally extinct in all the subjected states, the people readily transferred their allegiance to a prince, who seemed to merit it, by the splendor of his victories, the vigour of his administration, and the superior nobility of his birth. An union also in government opened to them the agreeable prospect of future tranquillity; and it appeared more probable, that they would thenceforth become terrible to their neighbours, than be exposed to their inroads and devastations. But these flattering views were soon overcast by the appearance of the Danes, who, during some centuries, kept the Anglo-Saxons in perpetual inquietude, committed the most barbarous ravages upon them, and at last reduced them to grievous servitude.

THE emperor Charlemagne, though naturally generous and humane, had been induced by bigotry to exercise great severities against the Pagan Saxons in Germany, whom he subdued; and besides often ravaging their country by fire and sword, he had in cool blood decimated all the inhabitants for their revolts, and had obliged them, by the most rigorous edicts, to make a seeming compliance with the christian doctrine. That religion, which had easily made its way among the British-Saxons by insinuation and address, appeared shocking to their German brethren, when imposed on them by the violence of Charlemagne; and the most generous and warlike of these Pagans had fled northward into Jutland, in order to escape the

the fury of his persecutions. Meeting there with a people of similar manners, they were readily received among them; and they soon stimulated the natives to concur in enterprizes, which both promised revenge on the haughty conquerors, and afforded subsistence to those numerous inhabitants, with which the northern countries were now overburthened^G. They invaded the provinces of France, which were exposed by the degeneracy and dissensions of Charlemagne's posterity; and being known there under the general name of Normans, which they received from their northern situation, they became the terror of all the maritime and even of the inland countries. They were also tempted to visit England in their frequent excursions; and being able by sudden inroads to make great progress over a people, who were not defended by any naval force, who had relaxed their military institutions, and who were sunk into a superstition, which had become odious to the Danes and antient Saxons, they made no distinction in their hostilities between the French and English kingdoms. Their first appearance in this island was in the year 787^H, when Brithric reigned in Wessex. A small body of them landed in that kingdom, with a view of learning the state of the country; and when the magistrate of the place questioned them concerning the reason of their enterprize, and cited them to appear before the king, and account for their intentions, they killed him, and flying to their ships, escaped into their own country. The next alarm was given to Northumberland in the year 794^I; when a body of these pirates pillaged a monastery; but their ships being much damaged by a storm, and their leader slain in a skirmish, they were at last defeated by the inhabitants, and the remainder of them put to the sword. Five years after Egbert had established his monarchy over England, the Danes landed in the Isle of Shepey, and having pillaged it, escaped with impunity^K. They were not so fortunate in their next year's enterprize, when they disembarked from thirty-five ships, and were encountered by Egbert, at Charmouth in Dorsetshire. The battle was bloody; but though the Danes lost great numbers, they maintained the post, which they had taken, and made good their retreat

^G Ypod. Neustria, p. 414. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 64. ^I Chron. Sax. p. 66. Alur. Beversl. p. 108. ^K Chron. Sax. p. 72. Mat. West, p. 155.

CHAP. retreat to their ships^L. Having learned by experience, II. that they must expect a vigorous resistance from this war-like prince, they entered into an alliance with the Britains of Cornwall; and landing two years after in that country, made an inroad with their confederates into the county of Devon; but were met at Hengelsdown by Egbert, and totally defeated^M. While England remained in this state of inquietude, and defended itself more by temporary expedients than by any regular plan of administration, Egbert, who alone was capable of providing effectually against this new evil, unfortunately died; and left the government to his son Ethelwolf.

ETHELWOLF.

THIS prince had neither the abilities nor vigour of his father; and was better qualified for governing a convent than a kingdom^N. He began his reign with dividing his dominions and delivering over to his eldest son Athelstan, the new conquered provinces of Essex, Kent and Suffex^O. But no inconveniencies seem to have arisen from this partition; as the continual terror of the Danish invasions prevented all domestic dissention. A fleet of these ravagers, consisting of thirty-three sail, appeared at Southampton; but were repulsed with great loss by Wolfhere, governor of the neighbouring county^P. The same year Æthelhelm, assisted by the inhabitants of Dorsetshire, routed another band which had disembarked at Portsmouth; but he obtained the victory after a furious engagement, and he bought it with the loss of his life^Q. Next year, the Danes made several inroads into England; and fought battles, or rather skirmishes, in East-Anglia and Lindsey and Kent^R; where, though they were sometimes repulsed and defeated, they always obtained their end of committing spoil upon the country, and carrying off their booty. They avoided coming to a general engagement, which was not suited to their plan of operations.

^L Chron. Sax. p. 72. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 2. Matth. West. p. 155. ^M Chron. Sax. p. 72. ^N W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 2. ^O W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 73. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. Matth. West. p. 155. ^Q Chron. Sax. p. 73. H. Hunting. lib. 5. ^R Matth. West. 156.

operations. Their vessels were small, and ran easily up the creeks and rivers; where they drew them ashore, and having formed an entrenchment around them, which they guarded with part of their number, the remainder scattered themselves every where, and carrying off the inhabitants, and cattle, and goods, they hastened to their ships, and quickly disappeared. If the military forces of the county was assembled, (for there was no time for troops to march from a distance) the Danes were either able to repulse them and to continue their ravages with impunity, or they betook themselves to their vessels; and setting sail, invaded suddenly some distant quarter, which was not prepared for their reception. Every part of England was held in continual alarm; and the inhabitants of one county dared not to give assistance to those of another, lest their own family and property should in the mean time be exposed by their absence to the fury of these barbarous ravagers^s. All orders of men were involved in this ruin; and the priests and monks, who had been commonly spared in the domestic quarrels of the heptarchy, were the chief objects on which the Danish idolaters exercised their rage and animosity. Every season of the year was dangerous; and no man could esteem himself a moment in safety, because of the absence of the enemy.

THESE incursions had now become almost annual; when the Danes, encouraged by their successes against France as well as England (for both kingdoms were alike exposed to this dreadful calamity) invaded the last in so numerous a body, as seemed to threaten it with universal subjection. But the English, more military than the Britains, whom, a few centuries before, they had treated with like violence, roused themselves with a vigour proportioned to the exigency. Ceorle, governor of Devonshire, fought a battle with one body of the Danes at Wiganborough^t, and put them to rout with great slaughter. King Athelstan attacked another at sea near Sandwich, sunk nine of their ships, and put the rest to flight^u. A body of them, however, ventured, for the first time, to take up winter quarters in England; and receiving in the spring a strong reinforcement of their countrymen in

851.

^s Alured Beverl. p. 108. ^t H. Hunt. lib 5. Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 120. ^u Chron. Sax. p. 74. Asserius, p. 2.

CHAP. in 350 vessels, they advanced from the Isle of Thanet, where they had stationed themselves; burnt the cities of London^w and Canterbury; and having put to flight Brictric, who now governed Mercia, under the title of King, they marched into the heart of Surrey, and laid every place waste around them^x. Ethelwolf, excited by the urgency of the danger, marched against them, at the head of the West-Saxons; and carrying with him his second son, Ethelbald, gave them battle at Okely, and gained a very bloody victory over them^y. This advantage procured but a short respite to the English. The Danes still maintained their settlement in the Isle of Thanet; and being attacked by Ealher and Huda, governors of Kent and Surrey, though defeated in the beginning of the action, they finally repulsed the assailants, and killed both the governors^z. They removed thence to the Isle of Shepey; where they took up their winter quarters, that they might extend farther their devastation and ravages.

THIS unsettled state of England hindered not Ethelwolf from making a pilgrimage to Rome; whither he carried his fourth, and favourite, son, Alfred, then only six years of age^a. He passed there a twelvemonth in exercises of devotion, and failed not in that most essential part of devotion, liberality to the church of Rome. Besides giving presents to the most distinguished ecclesiastics; he made a perpetual grant of three hundred mancuses^b a year to that see; one third to support the lamps of St. Peter's, another those of St. Paul's, a third to the pope himself^c. In his return home, he married Judith, the daughter to the emperor, Charles the Bald^d; but on his landing in England, he met with an opposition, which he little looked for.

HIS eldest son, Athelstan, being dead; Ethelbald, the second, who had assumed the government, formed, in
con-

^w W. Malm. lib. 2. ^x Matth. West p. 157. ^y Chron. Sax. 75. Asserius, p. 2. ^z Chron. Sax. p. 76. Asserius, p. 2. Simeon Dun. p. 120 ^a Asserius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. 76. Hunt. lib. 5. ^b A mancus was about the weight of our present half crown: See Spelman's Glossary, in verbo Mancus. ^c W. Malmef. lib. 2. cap. 2. ^d Asserius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. p. 76. H. Hunt. lib. 5. Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 140.


conjunction with many of the nobles, the project of excluding his father from a throne, which his weakness and superstition seem to have rendered him so ill-qualified to fill^E. The people were divided between the two princes; and a bloody civil war, joined to all the other calamities under which the English laboured, appeared unavoidable; when Ethelwolf had the facility to yield to the greatest part of his son's pretensions^F. He made with him a partition of the kingdom; and taking to himself the eastern part, which was always at that time esteemed the least considerable, as well as the most exposed^G, he delivered over to Ethelbald the sovereignty of the western. Immediately after, he summoned the states of the whole kingdom, and with the same facility, conferred a perpetual and important donation on the church.

THE ecclesiastics, in those days of ignorance, made rapid advances in the acquisition of power and grandeur; and inculcating the most absurd and most interested doctrines, though they met sometimes, from the contrary interests of the laity, with an opposition, which it required time and address to overcome, they found no obstacle in their reason or understanding. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with the temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had cast a wishful eye on a vast revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them, by a divine, indefeizable and inherent title. However little versed in the scriptures, they had been able to discover, that the priests, under the Jewish law, possessed a tenth of all the produce of the land; and forgetting what they themselves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Christians, they insisted that this donation was a perpetual property, conferred by heaven on those who officiated at the altar. During some centuries, the whole scope of sermons and homilies was directed to this purpose; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of these discourses, that all the practical parts of Christianity were comprehended in the exact and faithful payment of tythes to the clergy^H. Encouraged

^E W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2.

^F Flor. Wigorn. p. 583.

^G Asse rius, p. 3. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2. Matth. West. p. 158. ^H Padre Paolo, sopra beneficii, ecclesiastici, p. 51, 52. edit. Colon. 1675.

CHAP. II.  encouraged by their success in inculcating these doctrines; they ventured farther than they were warranted even by the levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all industry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of soldiers^L; nay, some canonists, went so far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tythe of the profits, made by the courtezans in the exercise of their profession^K. Tho' parishes had been instituted in England by Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, near two centuries before^L, the ecclesiastics had never yet been able to get possession of the tythes; and they therefore seized the present favourable opportunity of making that acquisition; when a weak, superstitious prince was on the throne, and when the people, discouraged by their losses from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invasions, were susceptible of any impression, which bore the appearance of religion^M. So meritorious was this concession deemed by the English, that, trusting entirely to supernatural assistances, they neglected the ordinary means of safety; and agreed, even in the present desperate extremity, that the revenues of the church should be exempted from all burthens, though imposed for national defence and security^N.

ETHELBALD and ETHELBERT.

ETHELWOLF lived only two years after making this grant^O; and by his will he left England shared between his two eldest sons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert; the west lying under the government of the former; the east under that of the latter^P. Ethelbald was a profligate prince; and marrying Judith, his mother-in-law, gave great offence to the people^Q; but moved by the remonstrances of Swithun, bishop of Winchester, he was at last prevailed on to divorce her. His reign was short^R; and Ethelbert, his brother, succeeding to the government,

^L Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 268.

^K Padre Paolo, p. 132.

^L Parker, p. 77.

^M Ingulf. p. 862. Selden's Hist. of

tythes, c. 8.

^N Asserius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. p. 76. W.

Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 3. M. West.

p. 158. Ingulf. p. 17. Ann. Beverel. p. 95.

^O Chron.

Sax. p. 76. Asser. p. 4.

^P H. Hunt. lib. 5.

^Q W.

Malm. lib. 2. cap. 3. Ingulf. p. 17.

^R Chron. Sax. p. 77.

ment, behaved himself, during a five years reign, in a manner more worthy of his birth and station. The kingdom, however, was still infested by the Danes, who made an inroad and sacked Winchester^R; but were there defeated. A body also of these pirates, who were quartered in the Isle of Thanet, having deceived the English by a treaty, unexpectedly broke into Kent, and committed great outrages^S.

E T H E R E D.

ETHELBERT was succeeded by his brother Ethered, who, though he defended himself with bravery, enjoyed, during his whole reign, no tranquillity from these Danish irruptions. His younger brother, Alfred, seconded him in all his enterprizes; and generously sacrificed to the public good all resentment, which he might entertain, on account of his being excluded by Ethered from a large patrimony, which had been left him by his father.

866.

THE first landing of the Danes in the reign of Ethered was among the East-Angles, who, more anxious for their present safety than for the common interest, entered into a separate treaty with the enemy; and furnished them with horses, which enabled them to make an irruption by land into the kingdom of Northumberland^T. They there seized the city of York; and defended it against Osbricht, and Ælla, two Northumbrian princes, who perished in the assault^U. Encouraged by these successes, and by the superiority, which they had acquired in arms, they now ventured, under the command of Hinguar and Hubba, their chieftains, to leave the sea-coast, and penetrating into Mercia, they took up their winter-quarters at Nottingham, where they threatened the kingdom with a final subjection. The Mercians applied to Ethered for succour in this extremity; and that prince, with his brother, Alfred, conducting a great army to Nottingham, obliged the enemy to dislodge from this post, and to retreat into Northumberland^X. Their restless disposition, and their

^R W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 3. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. r. Ann. Beverl. p. 95. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 78. ^T Asser. p. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 78. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 1. Simeon Dunelm. p. 141. ^U Asser. p. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 79. H. Hunt. lib. 5. ^X Ibid.

CHAP. their avidity for plunder, allowed them not to remain long in these quarters: They broke into East-Anglia, defeated and took prisoner, Edmund, the king of that country, whom they afterwards murdered in cool blood^y; and committing the most barbarous ravages on the people, particularly on the monasteries^z, they gave the East-Angles great cause to repent of the temporary relief, — which they had obtained, by assisting the common enemy.

THE next station of the Danes was at Reading; 871. whence they infested the neighbouring country by their incursions^A. The Mercians, desirous of shaking off their dependence on Ethered^B, refused to join him with their forces; and that prince, attended by Alfred, was obliged to march against the enemy, with the West-Saxons alone, his hereditary subjects. The Danes being defeated in an action, shut themselves up in their garrison; but quickly making thence an irruption, they routed the West-Saxons, and raised the siege. An action soon after ensued at Aston^C, in Berkshire, where the English, in the beginning of the day, were in danger of a total defeat. Alfred, advancing with one division of the army, was surrounded by the enemy in disadvantageous ground; and Ethered, who was at that time hearing Mass, refused to march to his assistance, till the prayers should be finished^D: But as he afterwards obtained the victory, this success, not the danger of Alfred, was ascribed by the monks to the piety of that monarch. This battle of Aston did not terminate the war: Another battle was a little after fought at Basing; where the Danes were more successful^E; and being reinforced by a new army from their own country, they became every day more terrible to the English. Amidst these confusions, Ethered died of a wound, which he had received in an action with the Danes; and left the

^y Affer. p. 4. W. Malm. lib. 2 cap. 3. H. Hunt. lib. 5. Math. West. p. 164. Alur. Beverl. p. 102. ^z Chron. Sax. p. 80. Ingulf. p. 22, 23. ^A M. West. p. 165. ^B W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 3. ^C Hearne's notes to Spelman's Life of Alfred, p. 41. Chron. Sax. p. 81. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 4. ^D Affer p. 7. W. Malm. lib. 2 cap. 3. Flor. Wigorn. p. 586, 587. Simeon Dunelm. p. 125. Brompton, p. 808. Anglia Sacra, vol. i p. 205. Alur. Beverl. p. 102. ^E Affer. p. 7. Chron. Sax. p. 81.

the inheritance of his cares and misfortunes, rather than
 of his grandeur, to his brother Alfred, who was twenty-
 two years of age.

CHAP.
 II.

A L F R E D.

THIS prince gave very early marks of those great
 virtues and shining talents, by which, during the
 most difficult times, he saved his country from utter ruin
 and subversion. Ethelwolf, his father, the year after his
 return with Alfred from Rome, had again sent the young
 prince thither with a numerous retinue; and a report be-
 ing spread of the king's death^p, the pope Leo III. gave
 Alfred the royal unction^q; whether prognosticating his
 future greatness from the appearances of his pregnant ge-
 nius, or willing to pretend, even in that age, to the right
 of conferring kingdoms. Alfred, on his return home, be-
 came every day more the object of his father's most ten-
 der affections; but being indulged in all youthful plea-
 sures, he was much neglected in his education; and he had
 already reached his twelfth year, when he was yet totally
 ignorant of the lowest elements of literature. His genius
 was first roused by the recital of Saxon poems, in which
 the Queen took delight; and this species of erudition,
 which is sometimes able to make a considerable progress
 even amongst barbarians, expanded those noble and eleva-
 ted sentiments, which he had received from nature^r.
 Encouraged by the Queen, and stimulated by his own ar-
 dent inclination, he soon learned to read these composi-
 tions; and proceeded thence to acquire the knowledge of
 the Latin tongue, where he met with authors, that bet-
 ter prompted his heroic spirit, and directed his generous
 views. Absorbed in these elegant pursuits, he regarded
 his accession to royalty rather as an object of regret than
 of triumph^s; but being called to the throne, in prefer-
 ence to his brother's children, as well by the will of his
 father, a circumstance which had great authority with

871.

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the

^p Chron. Sax. p. 77. ^q Asser. p. 2. W. Malm. lib. 2.
 cap. 2. Ingulf. p. 869. Simeon Dunelm. p. 126, 139. Ab-
 bat. Ruval. p. 354. Ann. Beverl. p. 96. ^r Asser. p. 5. M.
 West. p. 167. Flor. Wigorn. p. 587. Simeon Dunelm. p.
 122, 141. Brompton, p. 814. ^s Asser. p. 7.

CHAR. II. the Anglo-Saxons^K, as by the vows of the whole nation and the urgency of public affairs^L, he shook off his literary indolence, and exerted himself in defence of his people. He had scarce buried his brother, when he was obliged to take the field, in order to oppose the Danes, who had seized Wilton, and were exercising their usual ravages on the countries around. He marched against them with the few troops, which he could assemble on a sudden; and giving them battle, gained at first an advantage, but by his pursuing the victory too far, the superiority of the enemy's number prevailed, and recovered them the day^M. Their loss, however, in the action was so considerable, that, fearing Alfred would receive daily reinforcements from his subjects, they were contented to stipulate for a safe retreat, and promised to depart the kingdom. For that purpose they were conducted to London, and allowed to take up winter-quarters there; but, careless of their engagements, they immediately set themselves to the committing spoil in the neighbouring country. Burrhed, King of Mercia, in whose territories London was situated, made a new stipulation with them^N, and engaged them, by presents of money, to remove to Lindesey in Lincolnshire^O; a country which they had already reduced to ruin and desolation. Finding therefore no object in that place, either for their rapine or violence, they suddenly turned back upon Mercia, in a quarter where they expected to find it without defence; and fixing their station at Repton in Derbyshire^P, they laid the whole country desolate, with fire and sword. Burrhed, unable to withstand an enemy, whom no force could resist, and no treaties bind, abandoned his kingdom, and flying to Rome, took shelter in a cloyster^Q. He was brother-in-law to Alfred, and the last who bore the title of king in Mercia.

THE West Saxons were now the only remaining power in England; and though supported by the vigour and abilities

^K Ibid. p. 22. Simeon Dunelm. p. 121. ^L Simeon Dunelm. p. 127. ^M Asfer. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 82. H. Hunt. lib. 5. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 3. ^N Asfer. p. 8. H. Hunt. lib. 5. ^O M. West. p. 168. ^P Asfer. p. 8. ^Q Asfer. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 82. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 4. Flor. Wigorn. p. 589. Simeon Dunelm. p. 127. Ann. Beverl. p. 96.

ties of Alfred, they were unable to sustain the efforts of those ravagers, who from all quarters invaded them. A new swarm of Danes came over this year under three princes, Guthrum, Oscitel, and Amund^R; and having first joined their countrymen at Repton, they soon found the necessity of separating, in order to provide for their subsistence. Part of them, under the command of Haldene, their chieftain^S, marched into Northumberland, where they fixed their residence^T; part of them took quarters at Cambridge^U, from whence they dislodged in the ensuing summer, and seized Wereham, in the county of Dorset, the very center of Alfred's dominions^X. That prince so straitened them in these quarters, that they were content to come to a treaty with him, and stipulated to depart his country^Y. Alfred, well acquainted with their usual perfidy, obliged them to swear upon the holy reliques to the observance of the treaty^Z; not that he expected they would pay any veneration to the reliques; but he hoped, that, if they now violated this oath, their impiety would infallibly draw down upon them the vengeance of heaven. But the Danes, little apprehensive of this danger, suddenly, without seeking for any pretext, fell upon Alfred's army; and having put it to rout, marched westward, and took possession of Exeter^A. The prince collected new forces; and exerted such vigour, that he fought in one year eight battles against the enemy^B, and reduced them to the utmost extremity. He hearkened however to new proposals of peace; and was satisfied to stipulate with them, that they would settle somewhere in England^C, and would not permit the entrance of more ravagers into the kingdom. But while he was expecting the execution of this treaty, which it seemed the interest of the Danes themselves to fulfil, he heard that another body had landed, and having collected all the scattered troops of their countrymen, had surprised Chippenham,

F 2

^R H. Hunting. lib. 5. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 83. ^T Asfer. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 83. ^U Asfer. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 83. ^X H. Hunt. lib. 5. M. West. p. 168. ^Y Chron. Sax. p. 83. ^Z Asfer. p. 8. ^A Asfer. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 83. H. Hunt. lib. 5. Flor. Wigorn. p. 590. ^B Asfer. p. 8. The Saxon Chronicle, p. 82, says nine battles. ^C Asfer. p. 9. Alur. Beverl. p. 104.

CHAP. penham, then a considerable town, and were exercising their usual ravages all around them ^D.

II.

THIS last incident quite broke the spirit of the Saxons, and reduced them to despair. Finding that, after all the miserable havock, which they had undergone in their persons and in their property; after all the vigorous actions, which they had exerted in their own defence; a new band, equally greedy of spoil and slaughter, had disembarked among them; they believed themselves abandoned by heaven to destruction, and delivered over to those swarms of robbers, which the fertile north thus incessantly poured forth against them. Some left their country, and retired into Wales or fled beyond sea: Others submitted to the conquerors, in hopes of appeasing their fury by a servile obedience ^E: And every man's attention being now engrossed in concern for his own preservation, no one would hearken to the exhortations of the king, who summoned them to make, under his conduct, one effort more in defence of their prince, their country, and their liberties. Alfred himself was obliged to relinquish the ensigns of his dignity, to dismiss his servants, and to seek shelter, in the meanest disguises, from the pursuit and fury of his enemies. He concealed himself under a peasant's habit, and lived some time in the house of a neat-herd, who had been entrusted with the care of some of his cows ^F. There passed here an incident, which has been recorded by all the historians, and was long preserved by popular tradition; though it contains nothing memorable in itself, except so far as every circumstance is interesting, which attends so great virtue and dignity, reduced to such distress. The wife of the neat-herd was ignorant of the condition of her royal guest; and observing him one day busy by the fire-side in trimming his bow and arrows, she desired him to take care of some cakes, which were toasting, while she was employed elsewhere in other domestic affairs. But Alfred, whose thoughts were otherwise engaged, neglected this injunction; and the good woman, on her return, finding her cakes all burnt, rated the king very severely; and upbraided him, that he always seemed very well pleased to eat her

^D Asser. p. 9. H. Hunt. lib. 3. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 84.
^F Alured Beverl. p. 105. ^F Asser. p. 9.

her warm cakes, tho' he was thus negligent in toasting them^c. CHAP.
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By degrees, Alfred, as he found the search of the enemy become more remiss, collected some of his retainers, and retired into the center of a bog, formed by the stagnating waters of the Thone and Parret, in Somersetshire. He there found two acres of firm ground; and building a habitation on them, rendered himself secure by its fortifications, and still more by the unknown and inaccessible roads which led to it, and by the forests and morasses, with which it was every way environed. This place he called Æthelingey, or the Isle of Nobles^h; and it now bears the name of Athelney. He thence made frequent and unexpected sallies upon the Danes, who often felt the vigour of his arm, but knew not from what quarter the blow came. He subsisted himself and his followers by the plunder which he acquired; he procured them consolation by revenge; and from small successes, he opened their minds to hope, that, notwithstanding his present misfortunes, more important victories might at length attend his valourⁱ.

ALFRED lay here concealed, but not unactive, during a twelvemonth; when the news of a prosperous event reached his ears, and called him to the field. Hubba, the Dane, having spread devastation, fire, and slaughter, over Wales, had landed in Devonshire from twenty-three vessels, and laid siege to the castle of Kinwith, a place situated near the mouth of the small river Tau^k. Oddune, earl of Devonshire, with his followers, had taken shelter there; and being ill supplied with provisions, and even with water, he determined, by some vigorous blow, to prevent the necessity of submitting to the barbarous enemy^l. He made a sudden sally on the Danes before sunrise; and taking them unprepared, he put them to rout, pursued them with great slaughter, killed Hubba himself, and got possession of the famous *Reafsen*, or enchanted standard, in which the Danes put great confidence^m. It contained

^c Asfer. p. 9. M. West. p. 170. ^h Chron. Sax. p. 85.

W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 26. ⁱ M. West. p. 170. Simeon Dunelm. p. 128.

^k Asfer. p. 10. ^l Flor. Wigorn. 590. ^m Asfer. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 84. Abbas Rieval. p. 355. Alured Beret. p. 105.

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contained the figure of a raven, which had been inwove by the three sisters of Hinguar and Hubba, with many magical incantations, and which, by its different movements, prognosticated, as the Danes believed, the good or bad success of any enterprise^N.

WHEN Alfred observed this symptom of successful resistance in his subjects, he left his retreat; but before he would assemble them in arms, or urge them to any attempt which, if unfortunate, might, in their present despondency, prove fatal, he resolved, himself, to inspect the situation of the enemy, and to judge of the probability of success. For this purpose he entered their camp under the disguise of a harper, and passed unsuspected through every quarter. He so entertained them with his music and facetious humours, that he met with a welcome reception; and was even introduced to Guthrum, their prince's tent, where he remained some days^O. He remarked the supine security of the Danes, their contempt of the English, their negligence in foraging and plundering, and their dissolute wasting of what they gained by rapine and violence. Encouraged by these favourable appearances, he secretly sent out his emissaries to the most considerable of his subjects, and summoned them to a rendezvous, along with their warlike followers, at Brixton, on the borders of Selwood forest^P. The English, who had hoped to put an end to their calamities by fervile submission, now found the insolence and rapine of the conqueror more intolerable than all their past fatigues and dangers; and at the appointed day, they joyfully resorted to their prince. On his appearance before them, they received him with shouts of applause^Q; and could not satiate their eyes with the sight of this beloved monarch, whom they had long regarded as dead, and who now, with voice and looks expressing his confidence of success, called them to liberty and to vengeance. He instantly conducted them to Eddington, where the Danes were encamped; and taking advantage of his previous knowledge of the place, he directed his attack against the most unguarded quarter of the enemy. The Danes, surprised to see an army of English,

^N Affer. p. 10. ^O W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 64. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 85. ^Q Affer. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 85. Simeon Dunelm. p. 128. Alfred Beverl. p. 105. Abbas Rieyal. p. 354.

English, whom they considered as totally subdued, and still more astonished to hear Alfred was at their head, made but a faint resistance, notwithstanding their superiority of number; and were soon put to flight with great slaughter^R. The remainder of the routed army, with their prince, was besieged by Alfred in a fortified camp, to which they fled; but being reduced to extremity by want and hunger, they had recourse to the clemency of the victor, and offered to submit on any conditions^S. The king, no less generous than brave, gave them their lives; and even formed a scheme for converting them, from mortal enemies, into faithful subjects and confederates. He knew, that the kingdoms of East-Anglia and Northumberland were left totally desolate by the frequent inroads of the Danes; and he now purposed to re-people them by settling there Guthrum and his followers. He hoped that the new planters would at least betake themselves to industry, when, by reason of his resistance, and the exhausted condition of the country, they could no longer subsist by plunder; and that they might serve him as a rampart against any future incursions of their countrymen. But before he ratified these mild conditions with the Danes, he required, that they should give him one pledge of their submission, and of their inclination to coalesce with the English, by declaring their conversion to Christianity^T. Guthrum and his army had no aversion to this proposal; and, without much instruction, or argument, or conference, they were all admitted to baptism. The king answered for Guthrum at the font, gave him the name of Athelstan, and received him as his adoptive son^U.

THE success of this expedient seemed to correspond to Alfred's hopes: The greater part of the Danes settled peaceably in their new quarters^X: Some smaller bodies of the same nation, which were dispersed in Mercia, were distributed into the five cities of Derby, Leicester, Stamford, Lincoln, and Nottingham, and were thence called the Fif or Five-Burgers. The more turbulent and

880.

^R Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 85. Ethelwerd, lib. 4. cap. 4. ^S Asser. p. 19. Chron. Sax. p. 85. Alured Beverl. p. 105. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 85. ^U Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 90. ^X Asser. p. 11. Chron. Sax. p. 86. Simeon Dunelm. p. 129. Alured Beverl. p. 106.

CHAP. II. P. unquiet made an expedition into France under the command of Hastings^Y; and except by a short incursion of Danes, who sailed up the Thames and landed at Fulham, but suddenly retreated to their ships, on finding the country in a posture of defence^Z, Alfred was not for some years infested by the inroads of these barbarians^A.

THE king employed this interval of tranquillity in restoring order to the state, which had been shaken by so many violent convulsions, in establishing civil and military institutions, in composing the minds of men to industry and justice, and in providing against the return of like calamities. He was, more properly than his grandfather Egbert, the sole monarch of the English, (for so the Saxons were now universally called) because the kingdom of Mercia was at last incorporated in his state, and was governed by Ethelbert, his brother-in-law, who bore the title of Earl: And though the Danes, who peopled East-Anglia and Northumberland, were, for some time, ruled immediately by their own princes, they all acknowledged a subordination to Alfred, and submitted to his superior authority. As equality among subjects is the great source of concord, Alfred gave the same laws to the Danes and English, and put them entirely on the same footing in the administration both of civil and criminal justice: The fine for the murder of a Dane was the same with that for the murder of an Englishman; the great symbol of equality in those ages.

THE king, after rebuilding the ruined cities, particularly London^B, which had been destroyed by the Danes in the reign of Ethelwolf, established a regular militia for the defence of the kingdom. He took care that all his people should be armed and registered; he assigned them a regular rotation of duty; he distributed part into the castles and fortresses, which he erected at proper places^C; he required another part to take the field on any alarm, and to assemble at stated places of rendezvous; and he left a sufficient number at home, who were employed in the cultivation of the land, and who afterwards took their

^Y W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf. p. 26.

Sax. p. 86. Alured Beverl. p. 106.

^A After. p. 11.

^B After. p. 15. Chron. Sax. p. 88. M. West. p. 171.

Simeon Dunelm. p. 131. Brompton, p. 812. Alured Beverl.

ex edn. Heame, p. 106. ^C After. p. 18. Ingulf. p. 27.

their turn in military service ^D. The whole kingdom CHAP. II.
 was like one great garrison; and the Danes could no sooner appear in one place, than a sufficient number was assembled to oppose them, without leaving the other quarters defenceless or disarmed ^E.

BUT Alfred, sensible that the proper method of opposing an enemy, who made incursions by sea was to meet them on their own element, took care to provide himself with a naval power ^F, which, though the most natural defence of an island, had hitherto been totally neglected by the English. He increased the shipping of this kingdom both in number and force, and trained his subjects in the practice, as well of sailing, as of naval action. He distributed his armed vessels in proper stations around the island, and was sure to meet the Danish ships either before or after they had landed their troops, and to pursue them in all their incursions. Though the Danes might suddenly, by surprize, disembark on the coast, which was generally become desolate by their frequent ravages, they were encountered by the English fleet in their retreat; and escaped not, as formerly, by abandoning their booty, but paid, by their total destruction, the penalty of the disorders which they had committed.

IN this manner, Alfred, repelled several inroads of these pyratrical Danes, and maintained his kingdom, during some years, in safety and tranquillity. A fleet of a hundred and twenty ships of war, were stationed upon the coast; and being provided of warlike engines, as well as of expert seamen, both Frisians and English, (for Alfred supplied the defects of his own subjects by engaging able foreigners in his service) maintained a superiority above those smaller bands, with which England had been so often infested ^G. But at last Hastings, the famous Danish chieftain, having ravaged all the provinces of France, both along the sea-coast and the rivers of the Loire and Seine, and being obliged to quit that country, more by the desolation which he himself had occasioned, than by the resistance of the inhabitants, appeared off the coast of Kent with a fleet of 330 sail. The greater part of the enemy disembarked in the Rother, and seized the fort of Apuldore.

893.

^D Chron. Sax. p. 92, 93. ^E Spelman's life of Alfred, p. 147. edit. 1709. ^F Asser. p. 9. M. West. p. 179. ^G Asser. p. 11. Chron. Sax. p. 86, 87. M. West. p. 176.

CHAP. Apuldore. Hastings himself, commanding a fleet of eighty sail, entered the Thames^H, and fortifying Milton in Kent, began to spread his forces over the country, and to commit the most destructive ravages. But Alfred, on the first alarm of this descent, flew to the defence of his people, at the head of a select band of soldiers, whom he always kept about his own person^I; and gathering to him the armed militia from all quarters, appeared in the field with a force superior to the enemy^K. All straggling parties, whom necessity or love of plunder had drawn to a distance from their chief encampment, were cut off by the English^L; and these pyrates, instead of encreasing their spoil, found themselves cooped up in their fortifications^M, and obliged to subsist by the plunder which they had brought from France. Tired of this situation, which must in the end prove ruinous to them, the Danes at Apuldore rose suddenly from their encampment, with an intention of marching towards the Thames, and passing over into Essex: But they escaped not the vigilance of Alfred, who encountered them at Farnham, put them to rout^N, seized all their horses and baggage, and chased the runaways on board their ships, which carried them up the Colne to Mersey in Essex, where they entrenched themselves. Hastings, at the same time, and probably by concert, made a like movement; and deserting Milton, took possession of Bamslete, near the isle of Canvey in the same county^O; where he hastily threw up fortifications for his defence against the power of Alfred.

UNFORTUNATELY for the English, Gothrun, prince of the East-Anglian Danes, had died; as had also Guthred, whom the king had appointed governor of the Northumbrians; and these restless tribes being no longer restrained by the authority of their princes, and being encouraged by the appearance of so great a body of their countrymen, broke into rebellion, shook off the authority of Alfred, and yielding to their inveterate habits of war and depredation^P, embarked on board two hundred and forty vessels^Q, and appeared before Exeter in the west

^H Chron. Sax. p. 91, 92. H. Hunt. lib. 5. ^I Asfer.

p. 19. ^K Chron. Sax. p. 92. ^L Chron. Sax. p. 92.

^M Flor. Wigorn. p. 595. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 93. Flor.

Wigorn. p. 595. ^O Chron. Sax. p. 93. ^P Chron. Sax. p.

92. ^Q Flor. Wigorn. p. 596.

west of England. Alfred lost not a moment in opposing this new enemy. Having left some forces at London to make head against Hastings and the other Danes, he marched suddenly to the west^R; and falling on the rebels before they were aware, pursued them to their ships with great slaughter. The enemy sailing next to Suffex, began to plunder the country near Chichester; but the order, which Alfred had every where established, sufficed here, without his presence, for the defence of the place; and the rebels, meeting with a new repulse, where many of them were killed, and some of their ships taken^S, were obliged to put to sea and were discouraged from attempting any other enterprize.

MEANWHILE, the Danish invaders in Essex, having united their force under the command of Hastings, advanced into the inland country, and made spoil of all around them; but had soon reason to repent of their temerity. The English army, left in London, assisted by a body of the citizens, attacked the enemy's entrenchments at Bamflete, overpowered the garrison, and having executed great slaughter upon them, carried off the wife and two sons of Hastings^T. Alfred generously spared these captives; and even restored them to Hastings^U, on condition that he should depart the kingdom.

BUT though the king had thus honourably rid himself of this dangerous enemy, he had not entirely subdued or expelled the invaders. The pyritical Danes willingly followed in an excursion any prosperous leader, who gave them hopes of booty, but were not so easily induced to relinquish their enterprize, or submit to return baffled, and without plunder, into their native country. Great numbers of them, after the departure of Hastings, seized and fortified Shobury at the mouth of the Thames; and having left a garrison there, they coasted along the river, till they came to Boddington in the county of Gloucester; where, being reinforced by some Welsh, they threw up entrenchments, and prepared for their defence. The king here surrounded them with the whole force of his dominions^X; and as he had now a certain prospect of victory,

^R Chron. Sax. p. 93. H. Hunt. lib 5. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 96. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 94. M. West. p. 178. ^U M. West. p. 179. ^X Chron. Sax. p. 94.

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victory, he resolved to trust nothing to chance, but rather to master his enemies by famine than assault. They were reduced to such extremities, that, having eat their own horses, and having many of them perished with hunger^y, they made a desperate sally upon the English; and though the greater number fell in the action, a considerable body made their escape^z. These roved about for some time in England, still pursued by the vigilance of Alfred; they attacked Leicester with success, defended themselves in Hartford, and then fled to Quatford, where they were finally broken and subdued. The small remains of them either dispersed themselves among their countrymen in Northumberland and East-Anglia^a, or had recourse again to the sea, where they exercised piracy, under the command of Sigefert, a Northumbrian. This free-booter, well acquainted with Alfred's naval preparations, had framed vessels of a new construction, higher, and longer, and swifter, than those of the English: But the king soon shewed his superior skill, by building vessels still higher, and longer, and swifter, than those of the Northumbrians^b; and falling upon them, while they were exercising their ravages in the west, he took twenty of their ships; and having tried all the prisoners at Winchester, he hanged them as pirates and as the common enemies of mankind^c.

THE well-timed severity of this execution, together with the excellent posture of defence, established every where, restored full tranquillity in England, and provided for the future security of the government. The East-Anglian and Northumbrian Danes, on the first appearance of Alfred upon their frontiers, made anew the most humble submissions to him; and he thought it prudent to take them under his immediate government, without establishing over them a viceroy of their own nation^d. The Welsh also acknowledged his authority; and this great prince had now, by prudence and justice and valour, established his sovereignty over all the southern parts of the island, from the English channel to the frontiers of Scot-

^y Chron. Sax. p. 94. M. West. p. 179. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. ^z Chron. Sax. p. 95. ^a Chron. Sax. p. 97. ^b Chron. Sax. p. 98. H. Hunt. lib. 5. Alur. Beverl. p. 107. ^c Chron. Sax. p. 99. H. Hunt. lib. 5. M. West. p. 180. Alured Beverl. p. 107. ^d Flor. Wigorn. p. 598.

Scotland: When he died, in the vigour of his age and the full strength of his faculties, after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and a half^E; in which he deservedly attained the appellation of Alfred the Great, and the title of Founder of the English monarchy.

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THE merit of this prince, both in private and public life, may with advantage be set in opposition to that of any monarch or citizen, which the annals of any age or any nation, can present to us. He seems indeed to be the model of that perfect character, which, under the denomination of a sage or wise man, the philosophers have been fond of delineating, rather as a fiction of their imagination, than in hopes of ever seeing it really existing: So happily were all his virtues tempered together; so justly were they blended; and so powerfully did each prevent the other from exceeding its proper bounds! He knew how to conciliate the most enterprising spirit with the coolest moderation; the most obstinate perseverance with the easiest flexibility; the most severe justice with the gentlest lenity; the greatest vigour in command with the greatest affability of deportment^F; the highest capacity and inclination for science, with the most shining talents for action. His civil and his military virtues are almost equally the objects of our admiration; excepting only, that the former, being more rare among princes, as well as more useful, seem chiefly to challenge our applause. Nature also, as if desirous, that so bright a production of her skill should be set in the fairest light, had bestowed on him all bodily accomplishments, vigour of limbs, dignity of shape and air, with a pleasant, engaging and open countenance^G. Fortune alone, by throwing him into that barbarous age, deprived him of historians worthy to transmit his fame to posterity; and we wish to see him delineated in more lively colours, and with more particular strokes, that we may at least perceive some of those small specks, and blemishes, from which, as a man, it is impossible he could be entirely exempted.

BUT we should give but an imperfect idea of Alfred's merit, were we to confine our narration to his military exploits, and were not more particular in our account of his institutions for the execution of justice, and of his zeal for the encouragement of arts and sciences.

AFTER

^E After. p. 23. Chron. Sax. p. 99.

^F After. p. 13.

^G After. p. 5.

CHAP. II. AFTER Alfred had subdued and settled or expelled the Danes, he found the kingdom in the most wretched condition; lying in desolation from the ravages of those barbarians, and thrown into disorders, which were calculated to perpetuate its misery. Though the great armies of the Danes were broke, the country was full of straggling troops of that nation, who, being accustomed to live by plunder, were become incapable of industry, and who, from the natural ferocity of their manners, indulged themselves in the commission of violence, even beyond what was requisite to supply their necessities. The English themselves, reduced to the most extreme indigence by these continued depredations, had shaken off all bands of government; and those who had been plundered to-day, betook themselves to a like disorderly life, and from despair joined next day the robbers in pillaging and ruining their fellow-citizens^H. These were the evils, for which it was necessary that the vigilance and activity of Alfred should provide a remedy.

THAT he might render the execution of justice strict and regular, he divided all England into counties; these counties he subdivided into hundreds; and the hundreds into tythings^I. Every householder was answerable for the behaviour of his family, and his slaves, and even of his guests, if they lived above three days in his house^K. Ten neighbouring householders were formed into one corporation, who, under the name of a tything, decennary, or tithing, were answerable for each other's conduct, and over whom one person, called a tything-man, headbourn, or borsholder, was appointed to preside. Every man was punished as an outlaw, who did not register himself in some tything^L: And no man could change his habitation, without a warrant and certificate from the borsholder of the tything, to which he formerly belonged.

WHEN any person in any tything or decennary was guilty of a crime, the borsholder was summoned to answer for him; and if he was not willing to be surety for his appearance and his clearing himself, the criminal was committed to prison, and there detained till his trial. If

^H W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. M. West. p. 177. ^I W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 28. Brompton, p. 818. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 22. ^K Leg. St. Edw. cap. 27. ^L Ingulf, p. 28.

he fled, either before or after finding sureties, the borsholder and decennary became liable to enquiry, and were exposed to the penalties of law^M. Thirty-one days were allowed them for producing the criminal; and if that time elapsed without their being able to find him, the borsholder, with two other members of the decennary, was obliged to appear, and together with three chief members of the three neighbouring decennaries (making twelve in all) to swear that his decennary was free from all privity both of the crime committed, and of the escape of the criminal. If the borsholder could not find such a number to answer for their innocence, the decennary was compelled by fine to make satisfaction to the king, according to the degree of the crime^N. By this institution every man was obliged from his own interest to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of his neighbours; and was in a manner surety for the behaviour of those who were placed under the division, to which he belonged: Whence these decennaries received the name of frank-pledges.

SUCH a regular distribution of the people, with such a strict confinement in their habitation, may not be necessary in times, when men are more enured to obedience and justice; and it might perhaps be regarded as destructive of liberty and commerce in a polished state; but it was well calculated to reduce these fierce and licentious people under the salutary restraint of law and government. But Alfred took care to temper these rigours by other institutions favourable to the freedom and security of the citizens; and nothing could be more popular and liberal than his plan for the administration of justice. The borsholder summoned together his whole decennary to assist him in deciding any lesser difference, which occurred among the members of this small community. In affairs of greater moment, in appeals from the decennary, or in controversies arising between members of different decennaries, the cause was brought before the hundred, which consisted of ten decennaries, or a hundred families of freemen, and which was regularly assembled once in four weeks, for the deciding of causes^O. Their method of decision deserves to be noted, as being the origin of juries;

^M W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. ^N Leges St. Edw. cap. 20.
 apud Wilkins, p. 202. ^O Leg. Edw. cap. 2.

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juries; an institution, admirable in itself, and the best calculated for the preservation of liberty and the administration of justice, that ever was devised by the wit of man. Twelve freeholders were chosen; who having sworn, together with the hundreder or presiding magistrate of that division, to administer impartial justice^p, proceeded to the examination of that cause, which was submitted to their jurisdiction. And beside these monthly meetings of the hundred, there was an annual meeting, appointed for a more general inspection of the police of the district; for the enquiry into crimes, the correction of abuses in magistrates, and the obliging every person to shew the decennary in which he was registered. The people, in imitation of their ancestors, the antient Germans, assembled there in arms; whence a hundred was sometimes called a wapentake, and its court served both for the support of military discipline, and for the administration of civil justice^q.

THE next superior court to that of the hundred was the county-court, which met twice a year after Michaelmas and Easter, and consisted of all the freeholders of the county, who possessed an equal vote in the decision of causes. The bishop presided in this court, together with the alderman; and the proper object of the court was the receiving appeals from the hundreds and decennaries, and deciding such controversies as arose between men of different hundreds. Formerly, the alderman possessed both the civil and military authority; but Alfred, sensible that this conjunction of powers rendered the nobility dangerous and independent, appointed also a sheriff in each county; who enjoyed a co-ordinate authority with the former in the judicial function^r. His office also empowered him to guard the rights of the crown in the county, and to levy the fines imposed; which in that age formed no contemptible part of the public revenue.

THERE lay an appeal, in default of justice, from all these courts to the king himself in council; and as the people, sensible of the equity and great talents of Alfred, placed

^p *Fœdus Alfred, and Gothum, apud Wilkins, cap. 3. p. 47. Leg. Eshettani, cap. 2. apud Wilkins, p. 58. LL. Ethelr. §. 4. Wilkins, p. 117. q. Spelman in voce Wapentake.*
^r Ingulf, p. 870.

placed their chief confidence in him, he was soon overwhelmed with appeals from all parts of England. He was indefatigable in the dispatch of these causes^s; but finding that his time must be entirely engrossed by this branch of duty, he resolved to obviate the inconvenience, by correcting the ignorance or corruption of the inferior magistrates, from which it arose^t. He took care to have his nobility instructed in letters and the laws^u: He chose the earls and sheriffs from among the men most celebrated for probity and knowledge: He punished severely all malversation in office^x: And he removed all the earls, whom he found unequal to the trust^y; allowing only some of the most elderly to serve by a deputy, till their death should make room for more worthy successors.

THE better to guide the magistrates in the administration of justice, Alfred framed a body of laws; which, though now lost, served long as the basis of English jurisprudence, and is generally esteemed the origin of what is denominated the COMMON LAW. He appointed regular meetings of the states of England twice a year in London^z; a city which he himself had repaired and beautified, and which he thus rendered the capital of the kingdom. The similarity of these institutions to the customs of the antient Germans, to the practice of the other northern conquerors, and to the Saxons laws during the Heptarchy, prevents us from regarding Alfred as the sole author of this plan of government; and leads us rather to think, that, like a wise man, he contented himself with reforming, extending, and executing the institutions, which he found previously established. But on the whole, such, success attended his legislation, that every thing bore suddenly a new face in England: Robberies and iniquities of all kinds were repressed by the punishment or reformation of the criminals^a: And so exact was the general police, that Alfred, it is said, hung up, by way of bravado, golden bracelets near the highways; and no man dared to touch them^b. Yet amidst these rigours of

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justice,

^s Asser. p. 20. ^t Asser. p. 18, 21. Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Abbas Rieval. p. 355. ^u Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Brompton, p. 814. ^x Le Miroir de Justice, chap. 2. ^y Asser. p. 20. ^z Le Miroir de Justice. ^a Ingulf, p. 27. ^b W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 4. M. West. p. 177. Brompton, p. 818.

CHAP. II. justice, this great prince preserved the most sacred regard to the liberty of his people; and it is a memorable sentiment preserved in his will, that it was just the English should for ever remain as free as their own thoughts^C.

As good morals and knowledge are almost inseparable, in every age, though not in every individual; the care of Alfred for the encouragement of learning among his subjects was another useful branch of his legislation, and tended to reclaim the English from their former dissolute and barbarous manners: But the king was guided in this pursuit less by political views, than by his natural bent and propensity towards letters. When he came to the throne, he found the nation sunk into the grossest ignorance and barbarism, proceeding from the continued disorders in the government, and from the ravages of the Danes: The monasteries were destroyed, the monks butchered or dispersed, their libraries burnt; and thus the only seats of erudition in those ages were totally subverted^D. Alfred himself complains, that on his accession he knew not one person, south of the Thames, who could so much as interpret the Latin service; and very few in the northern parts, who had reached even that pitch of erudition^E. But this prince invited over the most celebrated scholars from all parts of Europe^F; he established schools every where for the instruction of his people; he founded, or at least repaired^G the university of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges, revenues and immunities; he enjoined by law all freeholders possessed of two hydes^H of land or more to send their children to school for their instruction^I; he gave preferment both in church and state to such only as had made some proficiency in knowledge^K: And by all these expedients he had the pleasure before his death, to see a great change in the face of affairs; and in a work of his, which is still extant, he congratulates himself on the progress which learning, under his patronage, had already made in England^L.

BUT

^C Asser. p. 24.

^D Asser. p. 18.

^E Asser. p. 25.

^F Matth. West. p. 167. Chron. Abb. de St. Petri de Burgo, p. 21.

^G Asser. p. 16. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 207.

^H A hyde contained land sufficient to employ one plough. Sec. H. Hunt. lib. 6. in A. D. 1008. Annal. Waverl. in A. D. 1083. Gervase of Tilbury says it commonly contained about 100 acres.

^I Abbas Rievallensis, apud Spel.

^K W.

Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4.

^L Asser. p. 26, 27.

BUT the most effectual expedient, employed by AL-CHAP. fred, for the encouragement of learning, was his own example, and the constant assiduity, with which, not-
 withstanding the multiplicity and urgency of his affairs, he employed himself in the pursuits of knowledge. He usually divided his time into three equal portions; one was employed in sleep, and the refection of his body by diet and exercise; another in the dispatch of business; a third in study and devotion: And that he might more exactly measure the hours, he made use of burning tapers of equal lengths, which he fixed in lanthorns^M; an expedient suited to that rude age, when the geometry of dialling and the mechanism of clocks and watches were totally unknown. And by such a regular distribution of his time, tho' he often laboured under great bodily infirmities^N, this martial hero, who fought in person fifty-six battles by sea and land^O, was able, during a life of no extraordinary length, to acquire more knowledge, and even to compose more books, than most studious men, though blest with the greatest leisure and application, have, in more fortunate ages, made the object of their uninterrupted industry.

SENSIBLE, that the people, at all times, especially when their understandings are obstructed by ignorance and bad education, are not much susceptible of speculative instruction, Alfred endeavoured to convey his morality by apologues, parables, stories, apophthegms, couched in poetry; and besides propagating among his subjects, former compositions of that kind, which he found in the Saxon tongue^P, he exercised his vein in inventing works of a like nature^Q; as well as in translating from the Greek the elegant fables of Æsop. He also gave Saxon translations of Orosius's and Bede's histories; and of Boethius concerning the consolation of philosophy^R. And he deemed it nowise derogatory from his other great characters of sovereign, legislator, warrior, and politician, thus

G 2

to

^M Asser. p. 20. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Chron. Abb. S. Petri de Burgo, p. 22. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 208. ^N Asser. p. 4, 12, 13, 17. M. West. p. 167. Flor. Wigorn. p. 588. ^O W. Malm. lib. 4. cap. 4. ^P Asser. p. 13. Flor. Wigorn. 598. ^Q Spelman, p. 124. Abbas Rieval. p. 355. Ann. Beverl. p. 96. ^R W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Brompton, p. 814.

CHAP. to lead the way to his people in the pursuits of literature.
II.

MEANWHILE, this prince was not negligent in encouraging the vulgar and mechanical arts, which have a more sensible, though not a closer connexion with the interests of society. He invited from all quarters, industrious foreigners to re-people his country, which had been laid desolate by the ravages of the Danes^s. He introduced and encouraged manufactures of all kinds; and no inventor or improver of any ingenious art did he suffer to go unrewarded^t. He prompted men of activity to betake themselves to navigation, to push commerce into the most distant countries, and to acquire riches by propagating industry among their fellow-citizens. He set apart a seventh portion of his own revenue for the maintaining a number of workmen, whom he constantly employed in rebuilding the ruined cities, castles, palaces, and monasteries^v. Even the elegancies of life were brought to him from the Mediterranean and the Indies^x; and his subjects, by seeing those productions of the peaceful arts, were taught to respect the virtues of justice and industry, from which alone they could arise. Both living and dead, Alfred was regarded, by foreigners no less than his own subjects, as the greatest prince after Charlemagne who had appeared in Europe during several ages, and as one of the wisest and best who had ever adorned the annals of any nation.

ALFRED had, by his wife, Ethelwitha, the daughter of a Mercian earl, three sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Edmund, died without issue, in his father's lifetime. The third, Ethelwerd, inherited his father's passion for letters, and lived a private life. The second, Edward, succeeded to his power; and passes by the appellation of Edward the Elder, being the first of that name who sat on the English throne.

EDWARD the Elder.

901. THIS prince, who equalled his father in military talents, though inferior to him in knowledge and erudition^z, found immediately, on his accession, a specimen

^s Affr. p. 13. Flor. Wigorn. p. 588.

^t Affr. p. 20.

^v Affr. p. 20. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4.

^x Flor. Wigorn. p.

594.

^z W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 4.

^z W. Malmesb. lib.

2. cap. 5. Hoveden, p. 421.

men of that turbulent life, which attended all princes, and even all individuals, in an age when men, less restrained by law or justice, and less occupied by industry, had no other aliment for their inquietude, but wars, insurrections, convulsions, rapine, and depredation. Ethelwald, his cousin-german, son to king Ethelbert, the elder brother of Alfred, insisted on his preferable right to the throne^A; and arming his partizans, took possession of Winburne, where he seemed determined to defend himself to the last extremity, and to await the issue of his pretensions^B. But when the king approached the town with a great army, Ethelwald, having the prospect of certain destruction, made his escape, and fled first into Normandy, and thence into Northumberland^C; where he hoped, that the people, who had been recently subdued by Alfred, and who were impatient of peace, would, on the intelligence of that great prince's death, seize the first pretence or opportunity of rebellion. The event did not disappoint his expectations: The Northumbrians declared for him^D; and Ethelwald, having thus connected his interest with the Danish tribes, went beyond sea, and collecting a body of these free-booters, he excited the hopes of all those who had been accustomed to subsist by rapine and violence^E. The East-Anglian Danes joined his party: The Five-burgers, who were seated in the heart of Mercia, began to put themselves in motion; and the English found that they were again menaced with those convulsions, from which the valour and policy of Alfred had so lately redeemed them. The rebels, headed by Ethelwald, made an incursion into the counties of Gloucester, Oxford, and Wilts; and having exercised their ravages in these places, they retired with their booty; before the king, who had assembled his army, was able to approach them. Edward, whoever, who was determined that his preparations should not be fruitless, conducted his forces into East-Anglia, and retaliated the injuries which the inhabitants had committed, by spreading the like devastation among them^F. Satiated with revenge,

^A Chron. Sax. p. 99, 100. ^B Chron. Sax. p. 100. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. ^C Brompton, p. 832. ^D Chron. Sax. p. 160. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 160. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 24. ^F H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. Brompton, p. 832.

CHAP. venge, and loaded with booty, he gave orders to retire:

II. But the authority of these antient Kings, which was feeble in peace, was not much better obeyed in the field; and the Kentish men, greedy of more spoil, ventured, contrary to repeated orders, to stay behind him, and to take up their quarters in Bury^G. This disobedience proved in the issue fortunate to Edward. The Danes assaulted the Kentish men; but met with so stout a resistance, that though they gained the field of battle, they bought that advantage by the loss of their bravest leaders, and among the rest, by that of Ethelwald, who perished in the action^H. The king, freed from the fear of so dangerous a competitor, made peace on advantageous terms with the East-Angles^I.

IN order to restore England to such a state of tranquillity as it was then capable of attaining, nought was wanting but the subjection of the Northumbrians, who, assisted by the scattered Danes in Mercia, continually infested the bowels of the kingdom. Edward, in order to divert the force of these enemies, prepared a fleet to attack them by sea; hoping, that when his forces appeared off their coast, they must at least remain at home, and provide for their defence^K. But the Northumbrians were less anxious to secure their own property than greedy to commit spoil on their enemy; and concluding, that the chief force of the English was embarked in the fleet, they thought the opportunity favourable, and entered Edward's territories with all their forces^L. The king, who was prepared against this event, attacked them on their return at Tetenhall in the county of Stafford, put them to rout, recovered all the booty, and pursued them with great slaughter into their own country^M.

ALL the rest of Edward's reign was a scene of continued and successful action against the Northumbrians, the East-Angles, the Five-burgers, and the foreign Danes, who invaded him from Normandy and Brittany^N. He was as provident in putting his kingdom in a posture of defence,

^G Chron. Sax. p. 101. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 101. Brompton, p. 832. ^I Chron. Sax. p. 102. Brompton, p. 832. Math. West. p. 181. ^K H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. ^L Chron. Sax. p. 102. Flor. Wigorn. p. 599. ^M Hoveden, p. 421. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 105. Brompton, p. 833.

defence, as vigorous in assaulting the enemy^o. He fortified the towns of Chester, Eddesbury, Warwic, Cherbury, Buckingham, Towcester, Maldon, Huntingdon, and Colchester. He fought two great battles at Ternsford and Maldon^p. He vanquished Thurketill, a great Danish chieftain, and obliged him to retire with his followers into France, in quest of spoil and adventures^q. He subdued the East-Angles, and forced them to swear allegiance to him: He expelled the two rival princes of Northumberland, Reginald and Sidroc, and acquired, for the present, the dominion of that province: Several tribes of the Britains were subjected by him; and even the Scots, who, during the reign of Egbert, had, under the conduct of Kenneth, their king, increased their power, by the final subjection of the Picts, were however obliged to give him marks of submission^r. In all these fortunate achievements he was assisted by the activity and prudence of his sister Ethelfleda who was widow to Ethelbert, earl of Mercia, and who, after her husband's death, retained the government of that province^s. This princess, who had been reduced to extremity in child-bed, refused afterwards all commerce with her husband; not from any weak superstition, as was common in that age, but because she deemed all domestic occupations unworthy of her masculine and ambitious spirit^t. She died before her brother^u; and Edward, during the remainder of his reign, took upon himself [the immediate government of Mercia, which before had been in some measure independent of the crown^x. The Saxon Chronicle fixes the death of this prince in 925^y: His kingdom devolved to Athelstan, his natural son^z.

A T H E L-

^o W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 5. Hoveden, p. 421. ^p Chron. Sax. p. 108. Flor. Wigorn. p. 601. ^q Chron. Sax. p. 106. ^r Chron. Sax. p. 110. Hoveden, p. 421. ^s H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 353. ^t W. Malmef. lib. 2. cap. 5. Math. West. p. 182. Ingulf, p. 28. Higden, p. 261. ^u Chron. Sax. p. 109. ^x Chron. Sax. p. 110. Brompton. p. 831. ^y Page 110. ^z W. Malmef. lib. 2. cap. 6. Brompton, p. 831. Math. West. p. 180.

925.

THE stain in this prince's birth was not, in those times, deemed so considerable as to exclude him from the throne: and Athelstan, being of an age, as well as of a capacity, fitted for government, obtained the preference to Edward's younger children, who, though legitimate, were of too tender years to rule a nation so much exposed both to foreign invasion and to domestic convulsions. Some discontents, however, prevailed on his accession; and Alfred, a nobleman of considerable power, was thence encouraged to enter into a conspiracy against him. This event is related by historians with circumstances, which the reader, according to the degree of credit he is disposed to give them, may impute either to the invention of monks, who forged them, or to their artifice, who found means to make them real. Alfred, it is said, being seized upon strong suspicions, but without any certain proof, firmly denied the conspiracy imputed to him; and in order to justify himself, he offered to swear to his innocence before the Pope, whose person, it was supposed, contained such superior Sanctity, that no one could presume to give a false oath in his presence, and yet hope to escape the immediate vengeance of heaven. The king accepted of the condition, and Alfred was conducted to Rome; where, either conscious of his innocence, or neglecting the superstition, to which he appealed, he ventured to make the oath required of him, before John, who then filled the papal chair. But no sooner had he pronounced the fatal words, than he fell into convulsions, of which in three days after he expired. The king, as if the guilt of the conspirator were now fully ascertained, confiscated his estate, and made a present of it to the monastery of Malmesbury^z; secure that no doubts would ever thenceforth be entertained concerning the justice of his proceedings.

THE dominion of Athelstan was no sooner established over his English subjects, than he endeavoured to give security to the government, by providing against the insurrections of the Danes, which had created so much disturbance to his predecessors. He marched into Northumberland;

^z W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. Spell. Conc. p. 407.

land; and finding, that the inhabitants bore with impatience the English yoke, he thought it prudent to give Sitric, a Danish nobleman, the title of king, and to attach him to his interests, by marrying him to his sister, Editha^A. But this policy proved by accident the source of dangerous consequences. Sitric died in a twelvemonth after; and his two sons by a former marriage, Anlaf and Godfrid, founding pretensions on their father's elevation, assumed the sovereignty, without waiting for Athelstan's consent. They were soon expelled by the power of that monarch; and the former took shelter in Ireland, as the latter did in Scotland^B; where he received, during some time, protection from Constantine, who then enjoyed the crown of that kingdom. The Scottish prince, however, continually solicited, and even menaced, by Athelstan, at last promised to deliver up his guest; but secretly detesting this treachery, he gave Godfred warning to make his escape^C; and that fugitive, after subsisting by piracy for some years, freed the king, by his death, from any farther anxiety. Athelstan, resenting Constantine's behaviour, entered Scotland with a great army; and ravaging the country with impunity^D, he reduced the Scots to such distress, that their king was content to preserve his crown, by making the most humble submissions to the enemy. The English historians assert^E, that Constantine did homage to Athelstan for his whole kingdom; and they add, that the latter prince, being urged by his courtiers to push the present favourable opportunity, and entirely subdue Scotland, replied, that it was more glorious to confer than conquer kingdoms^F. But those annals, so uncertain and imperfect in themselves, lose all credit, when national prepossessions and animosities have place: And on that account, the Scots historians, who, without having any more knowledge of the matter, strenuously deny the fact, seem more worthy of belief.

CONSTANTINE, whether he owed the retaining his crown to the moderation of Athelstan, who was unwilling to

^A Aured Beved. p. 109. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. Hoveden, p. 422. ^B W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. ^C W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. ^D Chron. Sax. p. 111. Hoveden, p. 422. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 354. ^E Hoveden, p. 422. ^F W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. Brompton, p. 838. Higden, p. 262. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 212.

CHAP. to employ all his advantages against him, or to the policy
 II. of that monarch, who esteemed the humiliation of an
 enemy a greater acquisition than the subjection of a discontented and mutinous people, thought the behaviour of the English more an object of resentment than of gratitude. He entered into a confederacy with Anlaf, who had collected a great Body of Danish pyrates, whom he found hovering in the Irish seas; and with some Welsh princes, who were terrified with the growing power of Athelstan: And all these allies made by concert an irruption with a great army into England. Athelstan, collecting his forces, met the enemy near Brunsbury in Northumberland, and defeated them in a general engagement^G. This victory was chiefly ascribed to the valour of Turketul, the English chancellor: For in those turbulent ages, no one was so much occupied in civil employments, as wholly to lay aside the military character^H.

THERE is a circumstance, not unworthy of notice, which historians relate with regard to the transactions of this war. Anlaf, on the approach of the English army, thought, that he could not venture too much to ensure a fortunate event; and employing the artifice formerly practised by Alfred against the Danes, he entered the enemy's camp in the habit of a minstrel. The stratagem was for the present attended with a like success. He gave such satisfaction to the soldiers, who flocked about him, that they introduced him to the king's tent; and Anlaf, having played before that prince and his nobles during their repast, was dismissed with a handsome reward. His prudence kept him from refusing the present; but his pride determined him, on his departure, to bury it, while he fancied that he was unespied by all the world. But a soldier in Athelstan's camp, who had formerly served under Anlaf, had been struck with some suspicion on the first appearance of the minstrel; and was engaged by curiosity to observe all his motions. He regarded this last action as a full proof of

^G Chron. Sax. p. 112, 113. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. Ethelwerd, cap. 5. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 354. Osberne, p. 80. Brompton, p. 839. Flor. Wigorn. p. 603. Math. West. p. 186. Ingulf, p. 37.

^H The office of chancellor among the Anglo-Saxons resembled more that of a secretary of state, than that of our present chancellor. See Spelman in voce *Cancellarius*.

of Anlaf's disguise; and he immediately carried the intelligence to Athelstan, who blamed him for not sooner giving him information, that he might have seized his enemy. But the soldier told him, that as he had formerly sworn fealty to Anlaf, he could never have pardoned himself the treachery of betraying and ruining his antient master; and that Athelstan himself, after such an instance of his criminal conduct, would have equal reason to doubt of his allegiance. Athelstan, having praised the generosity of the soldier's principles, reflected on the incident, which he foresaw might be attended with important consequences. He removed his station in the camp; and as a bishop arrived that evening with a reinforcement of troops, (for the ecclesiastics were then no less warlike than the civil magistrates) he occupied with his train that very place which had been left vacant by the king's removal. The precaution of Athelstan was found prudent: For no sooner had darkness fallen, than Anlaf broke into the camp, and hastening directly to the place where he had left the king's tent, put the bishop to death, before he had time to prepare for his defence¹.

THERE fell several Danish and Welsh princes in the action of Brunsbury^k; and Constantine and Anlaf made their escape with difficulty, leaving the greatest part of their army on the field of battle. After this success, Athelstan enjoyed his crown in tranquillity; and he is regarded as one of the ablest and most active of those antient princes. He passed a remarkable law, which was calculated for the encouragement of commerce, and which it required some largeness of mind, in that age, to have devised: That a merchant, who had made three long sea-voyages on his own account, should be admitted to the rank of a thane or gentleman. This prince died at Gloucester in the year 941^l, after a reign of sixteen years; and was succeeded by his brother Edmund.

E D M U N D.

¹ W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 6. Higden, p. 263.

^k Brompton, p. 839. Ingulf, p. 29.

^l Chron. Sax. p. 114.

941.

EDMUND, on his accession, met with disturbance from the restless Northumbrians, who lay in wait for every opportunity of breaking into rebellion. But marching suddenly with his forces into their country, he so overawed the rebels, that they endeavoured to appease him by the most humble submissions^M. In order to give him the surer pledge of their obedience, they offered to embrace Christianity; a religion which the English Danes had frequently professed, when reduced to difficulties, but which, for that very reason, they regarded as a badge of servitude, and shook off as soon as a favourable opportunity offered. Edmund, trusting little to their sincerity in this forced submission, used the precaution of removing the Five-burgers from the towns of Mercia, in which they had been allowed to settle; because it was always found, that they took advantage of every commotion, and introduced the rebellious or foreign Danes into the heart of the kingdom^N. He also conquered Cumberland from the Britains; and conferred that territory on Malcolm, king of Scotland, on condition that he should do homage for it, and protect the north from all future incursions of the Danes^O.

EDMUND was very young when he came to the crown; yet was his reign short, as his death was violent. One day, as he was solemnizing a festival in the county of Gloucester, he remarked, that Leof, a notorious robber, whom he had sentenced to banishment, had yet the boldness to enter the hall where he himself dined, and to sit at table with his attendants. Entaged at this insolence, he ordered him to leave the room; but on his refusing to obey, the king, whose temper, naturally choleric, was inflamed by this additional insult, leaped on him himself, and seized him by the hair: But the ruffian, pushed to extremity, drew

^M W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Brompton, p. 857.

^N Chron. Sax. p. 114. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 355. Brompton, p. 857. Chron. de Mailrose, p. 148. Higden, p. 263. Alur. Beverl. p. 110. ^O Chron. Sax. p. 115. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Hoveden, p. 423. Brompton, p. 857. Flor. Wigorn. p. 604.

drew his dagger, and gave Edmund a wound, of which he immediately expired^P. This event happened in the year 946^Q; and in the sixth year of the king's reign. Edmund left male-issure, but so young, that they were incapable of governing the kingdom; and his brother, Edred, was promoted to the crown.

E D R E D.

THE reign of this prince, as those of his predecessors, was disturbed by the rebellions and incursions of the Northumbrian Danes, who, though frequently quelled, were never entirely subdued, nor had ever paid a sincere allegiance to the crown of England. The succession of a new king seemed to them a favourable opportunity for shaking off the yoke; but on Edred's appearance with an army, they made him their wanted submissions; and the king having wasted the country with fire and sword, as a punishment of their rebellion^R, obliged them to renew their oaths of allegiance; and he straight retired with his forces. The obedience of the Danes lasted no longer than the present terror. Provoked at the devastations of Edred, and even reduced by necessity to subsist on plunder, they broke into a new rebellion, and were again subdued^S: But the king, now instructed by experience, took better precautions against their future revolt. He fixed English garrisons in their most considerable towns; and placed over them an English governor, who might watch all their motions, and suppress their insurrections on the first appearance. He obliged also Malcolm, king of Scotland, to renew his homage for the lands which he held in England^T.

EDRED, though not unwarlike, nor unfit for active life, lay under the influence of the lowest superstition, and had blindly delivered over his conscience to the guidance of Dunstan, commonly called St. Dunstan, abbot of Glastenbury^U, whom he advanced to the highest offices, and who covered, under the appearance of sanctity, the most violent

^P W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Hoveden, p. 423. Chron. de Mailrose, p. 148. ^Q Chron. Sax. p. 115. Math. West, p. 188. Ingulf, p. 29. Brompton, p. 858. ^R Hoveden, p. 423. Wallingford, p. 541. ^S Ethelwerd, cap. 7. Hoveden, p. 423. ^T Math. West. p. 186. Higden, p. 263. ^U W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Brompton, p. 862.

CHAP. H. lent and most insolent ambition. Taking advantage of the implicit trust reposed in him by the king, this churchman imported into England a new order of monks, who much changed the state of ecclesiastical affairs, and excited, on their first establishment, the most violent commotions.

FROM the introduction of Christianity among the Saxons, there had been monasteries in England; and these establishments had extremely multiplied, by the donations of the princes and nobles; whose superstition, derived from their ignorance and precarious life, and increased by remorse for the crimes into which they were so frequently betrayed, knew no other expedient for appeasing the Deity than a profuse liberality towards the ecclesiastics. But the monks had hitherto been a species of secular priests, who lived after the manner of the present canons or prebendaries, and were both intermingled, in some degree, with the world, and endeavoured to render themselves useful to it. They were employed in the education of youth^x: They had the disposal of their own time and industry: They were not subjected to the rigid rules of an order: They had made no vows of implicit obedience to their superiors^y: And they still retained the choice, without quitting the convent, either of a married or a single life^z. But a mistaken piety had produced in Italy a new species of monks, called Benedictines; who, carrying farther the plausible principles of mortification, secluded themselves entirely from the world, renounced all claim to liberty, and made a merit of the most inviolable chastity. These practices and principles, which superstition at first engendered, were greedily embraced and promoted by the policy of the court of Rome. The Roman pontiff, who was making every day great advances towards an absolute sovereignty over the ecclesiastics, perceived, that the celibacy alone of the clergy would break off entirely their connexion with the civil power, and depriving them of every other object of ambition, engage them to promote, with unceasing industry, the grandeur of their own order. He was sensible, that so long as the monks were indulged in marriage, and were allowed families, they never could be

^x Osberne, in *Anglia Sacra*, tom. 2. p. 92. ^y Osberne, p. 91. ^z See Wharton's notes to *Anglia Sacra*, tom. 2. p. 91. Gervase, p. 1645. Chron. Wint. MS. apud Spel. Conc. p. 434.

be subjected to a strict rule, or reduced to that slavery under their superiors, which was requisite to procure to the orders, issued from Rome, a ready and zealous obedience. Celibacy, therefore, began to be extolled, as the indispensable duty of priests; and the Pope undertook to make all the clergy throughout the western world renounce at once the privilege of marriage: A fortunate policy, but at the same time an undertaking the most difficult of any, since he had the strongest propensities of human nature to encounter, and found, that the same connexions with the female sex, which generally encourages devotion, were here unfavourable to the success of his project. It is no wonder, therefore, that this master-stroke of art should have met with violent contradiction, and that the interests of the hierarchy, and the inclinations of the priests, being now placed in this singular opposition, should, notwithstanding the continued efforts of Rome, have retarded the execution of that bold scheme, during the course of near three centuries.

As the bishops and parochial clergy lived apart with their families, and were more connected with the world, the hopes of success with them were fainter, and the pretence for making them renounce marriage was much less plausible. But the Pope, having cast his eye on the monks as the basis of his authority, was determined to reduce them under strict rules of obedience, to procure them the credit of sanctity by an appearance of the most rigid mortification, and to break off all their other ties, which might interfere with his spiritual policy. Under pretence, therefore, of reforming abuses, which were, in some degree, unavoidable in the antient establishments, he had spread over the southern countries of Europe the severe laws of the monastic life, and began to form attempts towards a like innovation in England. The favourable opportunity offered itself (and it was greedily seized) arising from the weak superstition of Edred, and the violent impetuous character of Dunstan.

DUNSTAN was born of noble parents in the west of England; and being educated under his uncle, Adhelm, then Archbishop of Canterbury, had betaken himself to the ecclesiastical life, and had acquired some character in the court of Edmund. He was, however, defamed to that prince as a man of licentious manners^A; and finding his

^A Osberne, p. 95. Matth. West. p. 187

CHAP.
II.

his fortune blasted by these suspicions, his ardent ambition prompted him to repair his indiscretions by running into an opposite extreme. He secluded himself entirely from the world; he framed a cell so small that he could neither stand erect in it, nor stretch out his limbs during his repose; and he here employed himself perpetually either in devotion or in manual labour^B. It is probable, that his brain became gradually crazed by these solitary occupations, and that he imagined chimeras, which, being believed by himself and his stupid votaries, procured him the general character of sanctity among the people. He fancied, that the devil, among the frequent visits, which he paid him, was one day more earnest than usual in his temptations; till Dunstan, provoked at his importunities, seized him by the nose with a pair of red-hot pincers, as he put his head into the cell; and he held him there, till that malignant spirit made the whole neighbourhood resound with his bellowings. This notable exploit was seriously credited and extolled by the public; it is transmitted to posterity by one who, considering his age, may pass for a writer of some elegance^C; and it insured to Dunstan, a reputation, which no real piety, much less virtue, could, even in the most enlightened period, have ever been able to procure him with the people.

SUPPORTED by the character, obtained in his retreat, Dunstan appeared again in the world; and gained such an ascendant over Edred, who had succeeded to the crown, as made him, not only the director of his conscience, but his counsellor in the most momentous affairs of government. He was placed at the head of the treasury^D, and being thus possessed both of power at court, and of credit with the populace, he was enabled to attempt with success the most arduous undertakings. Finding, that his advancement had been owing to the opinion of his austerities, he professed himself a partizan of the rigid monastic rules; and after introducing that reformation into the convents of Glastenbury and Abingdon, he endeavoured to render it universal in the kingdom.

THE minds of men were already well prepared for this innovation. The praises of an inviolable chastity had been carried to the highest extravagance by some of the

^B Osberne, p. 96. ^C Osberne, p. 97. ^D Osberne, p. 102. Wallingford, p. 541.

the first preachers of christianity among the Saxons: The pleasures of love had been represented as incompatible with christian perfection: And a total abstinence from all commerce with the sex was deemed such a meritorious penance, as was sufficient to atone for the greatest enormities. The consequence seemed natural, that those at least who officiated at the altar should be clear of this pollution; and when the doctrine of transubstantiation, which was now creeping in^E, was once fully established, the reverence to the real body of Christ in the eucharist, bestowed on this argument an additional force and influence. The monks knew how to avail themselves of all these popular topics, and to set off their own character to the best advantage. They affected the greatest austerity of life and manners: They indulged themselves in the highest strains of devotion: They inveighed bitterly against the vices and pretended luxury of the age: They were particularly vehement against the dissolute lives of the secular clergy, their rivals: Every instance of libertinism in that order was represented as a general corruption: And where other topics of defamation were wanting, their marriage became a sure object of invective, and their wives received the name of *concubine*, or other more opprobrious appellation. The secular clergy, on the other hand, who were numerous and rich, and possessed the ecclesiastical dignities, defended themselves with vigour, and endeavoured to retaliate upon their adversaries. The people were thrown into agitation; and few instances occur of more violent dissensions, excited by the most material differences in religion; or rather by the most frivolous: Since it is a just remark, that the more affinity there is between theological parties, the greater commonly is their animosity.

THE progress of the monks, which was become considerable, was somewhat retarded by the death of Edred, their partizan, who expired after a reign of nine years^F. He left children; but as they were infants, his nephew, Edwy, son to Edmund, was placed on the throne.

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E D W Y.

^E Spel. Conc. vol. 1. p. 452.^F Chron. Sax. p. 115.

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EDWY, at the time of his accession, was not above sixteen or seventeen years of age, and was possessed of the most amiable figure, and even endowed, according to authentic accounts, with the most promising virtues^G. He would have been the favourite of his people, had he not unhappily, on the commencement of his reign, been engaged in a controversy with the monks, whose rage neither the graces of the body nor the virtues of the mind could mitigate, and who have pursued his memory with the same unrelenting vengeance, which they exercised against his person and dignity during his short and unfortunate reign. There was a beautiful princess of the royal blood, called Elgiva, who had made impression on the tender heart of Edwy; and as he was of an age, when the force of the passions begins first to be felt, he had ventured, contrary to the advice of his gravest counsellors, and the remonstrances of the more dignified ecclesiastics^H, to espouse her; though she was within the degrees of affinity, prohibited by the canon-law^I. As the austerity, affected by the monks, made them particularly violent on this occasion, Edwy entertained a strong prepossession against them; and seemed on that account determined not to second their project, of expelling the seculars from all the convents, and of acquiring to themselves possession of those rich establishments. The war was therefore declared between the king and the monks; and the former soon found reason to repent his provoking such dangerous enemies. On the day of his coronation, his nobility were assembled in a great hall, and were indulging themselves in that riot and disorder, which, from the example of their German ancestors, had become habitual to the English^K; when Edwy, attracted by softer pleasures, retired into the Queen's apartment, and in that privacy, gave reins to his fondness towards his wife, which was only moderately checked by the presence of her mother. Dunstan conjectured the reason of the king's retreat; and carrying along with him, Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, over whom he had gained an entire as-

cendant,

^G H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356.^H W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap.

7.

^I Ibid.^K Wallingford, p. 542.

endant, he burst into the apartment, upbraided Edwy with his lasciviousness, probably bestowed on the Queen the most opprobrious epithet which can be applied to her sex, and tearing him from her arms, pushed him back, in a disgraceful manner, into the banquet of the nobles^L. Edwy, though young and opposed by the prejudices of the people, found an opportunity of taking revenge for this public insult. He questioned Dunstan concerning the administration of the treasury during the reign of his predecessor^M; and when that minister refused to give any account of money, expended, as he affirmed, by the late king's orders, he accused him of malversation in his office, and banished him the kingdom^N. But Dunstan's cabal was not unactive during his absence: They filled the people's ears with high panegyrics on his sanctity: They exclaimed against the impiety of the king and queen: And having poisoned the minds of men by these declamations, they proceeded to still more outrageous violences against the royal authority. Archbishop Odo sent into the palace a party of soldiers, who seized the queen, and having burned her face with a red-hot iron, in order to destroy that fatal beauty, which had seduced Edwy, they carried her by force into Ireland, there to remain in perpetual exile^O. Edwy, finding it in vain to resist, was obliged to consent to his divorce, which was pronounced by Odo^P; and a catastrophe, still more dismal, awaited the unhappy Elgiva. That amiable princess, being cured of her wounds, and having even obliterated the scars, with which Odo had hoped to deface her beauty, returned into England, and was flying to the embraces of the king, whom she still regarded as her husband; when she fell into the hands of a party, whom the primate had ordered to intercept her. Nothing but her death could now give security to Odo and the monks; and her most cruel death was requisite to satiate their vengeance. She was hamstringed; and expired a few days after at Gloucester in the most acute torments^Q.

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^L W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Osbornes, p. 83. 105. M. West. p. 193. 196. ^M Wallingford, p. 342. Alur. Beverl. p. 112. ^N W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 7. Hoveden, p. 429. Osbornes, p. 84. 106. Bampton, p. 863. ^O Osbornes, p. 84. Geruise, p. 1644. ^P Hoveden, p. 429. ^Q Osbornes, p. 84. Geruise, p. 1645, 1646.

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THE English, blinded with superstition, instead of being shocked with this inhumanity, exclaimed that the misfortunes of Edwy and his spouse were a just judgment for their dissolute contempt of the ecclesiastical statutes. They even proceeded to rebellion against their sovereign; and having placed Edgar at their head, the younger brother of Edwy, a boy of thirteen years of age, they soon put him in possession of Mercia, Northumberland, East Anglia; and chased Edwy into the southern countries ^R. That it might not be doubtful at whose instigation this revolt was undertaken; Dunstan returned into England ^S, and took upon him the government of Edgar and his party. He was first installed in the see of Worcester, then in that of London ^T; and, on Odo's death, and the violent expulsion of Brighthelm, his successor, in that of Canterbury ^U; all which he long kept possession of. Odo is transmitted to us by the monks under the character of a man of piety: Dunstan was even canonized; and was one of those numerous saints of the same stamp who disgrace the Romish calendar. Meanwhile the unhappy Edwy was excommunicated ^X, and pursued with unrelenting vengeance; but his death, which happened soon after, freed his enemies from all farther inquietude; and gave Edgar peaceable possession of the government ^Y.

E D G A R.

^R Osberne, p. 106. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Matth. West. p. 196. ^S Hoveden. p. 425. Osberne, p. 107. Brompton, p. 863. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 117. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Wallingford, p. 544. ^U Hoveden, p. 425. Osberne, p. 109. Brompton, p. 864. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Matth. West. p. 196. Higden, p. 267. ^X Brompton, p. 863.

^Y There is a seeming contradiction in antient historians with regard to some circumstances of the story of Edwy and Elgiva. It is agreed, that this prince had a violent passion for his second or third cousin, Elgiva, whom he married, though within the degrees prohibited by the canons. It is also agreed, that he was dragged from a lady on the day of his coronation, and that the lady was afterwards treated with the singular barbarity above mentioned. The only difference is, that Osberne and some others call her his strumpet, not his wife, as she is said to be by Malmesbury. But this difference is easily reconciled: For if Edwy married her contrary to the canons, the monks would be sure to deny her to be his wife, and would insist that she could be nothing but his strumpet: So that, on the whole, we may esteem this representation of the matter as certain; at least,

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in such early youth, soon discovered an excellent capacity in the administration of affairs; and his reign is one of the most fortunate, which we meet with in the antient English history. He shewed no aversion to war; he made the wisest preparations against invaders: And by his vigour and foresight, he was enabled, without any danger of suffering insults, to indulge his inclination towards peace, and to employ himself in supporting and improving the internal government of his kingdom^z. He maintained a body of disciplined troops; which he quartered in the north, in order to keep the mutinous Northumbrians in subjection, and to repel the inroads of the Scots. He built and supported a powerful navy^a; and that he might retain the seamen in the practice of their duty, and present perpetually a formidable armament to his enemies, he stationed three squadrons off the coast, and ordered them to make, from time to time, the circuit of his dominions^b. The foreign Danes dared not to approach a country which appeared in such a posture of defence: The domestic Danes saw inevitable destruction to be the consequence of their tumults and insurrections: The
neigh-

least, as by far the most probable. If Edwy had only kept a mistress, it is well known, that there were methods of accommodation with the church, which would have prevented the clergy from proceeding to such extremities against him: But his marriage, contrary to the canons, was an insult on their authority, and called for their highest resentment.

^zChron.Sax. p. 116. Knighton, p. 2313. Brompt. p. 864, 869. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Chron. Abb. St. Petti de Burgo, p. 29.

^a Higden, p. 265. ^b Many of the English historians make Edgar's ships amount to an extravagant number, to 3000, or 3600: See Hoveden, p. 426. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Abbas Rieval. p. 360. But Brompton, p. 869, says that Edgar had 4000 vessels. How can these accounts be reconciled to probability, and to the state of the navy in the time of Alfred? W. Thorne makes the whole number amount only to 300, which is more probable. The fleet of Ethelred, Edgar's son, must have been short of 1000 ships; yet the Saxon Chronicle, p. 137, says it was the greatest navy that ever had been seen in England.

CHAP. II. neighbouring princes of Wales, Scotland, the Isle of Man, the Orkneys, and even of Ireland^c, were reduced to pay submissions to so formidable a prince. He carried his superiority to a great height, and might have excited an universal combination against him, had not his power been so well established, as to deprive his enemies of all hopes of shaking it. It is said, that residing once at Chester, and having proposed to go by water to the abbey of St. John the Baptist, he obliged eight of his tributary kings to row him in a barge upon the Dee^d. The English historians are fond to mention the name of Kenneth III. king of Scots among the number; The Scots historians, either deny the fact, or assert, that their king, if ever he acknowledged himself a vassal to Edgar, did him homage, not for his crown, but for the dominions, which he held in England.

BUT the chief means, by which Edgar maintained his authority, and preserved public peace, was the paying court to Dunstan and the monks, who had at first placed him on the throne, and who, by their pretensions to superior sanctity and purity of manners, had acquired an ascendant over the people. He favoured their scheme for dispossessing the secular canons of all the monasteries^e; he bestowed preferment on none but their partizans; he allowed Dunstan to resign the see of Worcester into the hands of Oswald, one of his creatures^f, and to place Ethelwold, another of them, in that of Winchester^g; he consulted these prelates in the administration of all ecclesiastical affairs, and even in that of many civil; and though the vigour of his own genius prevented him from being implicitly guided by them, the king and the bishops found such advantages in their mutual harmony, that they acted

^c Spel. Conc. p. 432. ^d W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 406. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356. Brompton, p. 869. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Matth. West. p. 192. Higden, p. 267. Atur. Beverl. p. 112. ^e Chron. Sax. p. 117, 118. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425, 426. Osberne, p. 112. Gervase, p. 1646. Brompton, p. 867. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605, 606. Matth. West. p. 195. Diceto, p. 458. Higden, p. 264. Spel. Conc. p. 433, 438, 439, 443. ^f W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425. ^g Gervase, p. 1646. Brompton, p. 864. Flor. Wigorn. p. 606. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 27, 28.

acted always in concert, and united their influence in pre-CHAP.
serving the peace and tranquillity of the public. II.

IN order to compleat the great work of placing the new order of monks in all the convents, Edgar summoned a general council of the prelates and the heads of the religious orders. He here inveighed against the dissolute lives of the secular clergy; the smallness of their tonsure, which, it is probable, maintained no longer any resemblance to the crown of thorns; their negligence in attending the exercise of their function; and their mixing with the laity in the pleasures of gaming, hunting, dancing and singing; and their openly living with concubines, by which it is commonly supposed he meant their wives. He then turned himself to Dunstan the primate; and in the name of king Edred, whom he supposed to look down from heaven with indignation against all those enormities, he thus addressed him. " 'Tis you, Dunstan, by whose
" advice I founded monasteries, built churches, and ex-
" pended my treasure in the support of religion and re-
" ligious houses. You was my counsellor and assistant in
" all my schemes: You was the director of my consci-
" ence: To you I was obedient in all things. When
" did you call for supplies, which I refused you? Was
" my assistance ever wanting to the poor? Did I deny
" support and establishments to the clergy and the con-
" vents? Did I not hearken to your instructions, who
" told me, that these charities were, of all others, the
" most grateful to my Maker, and fixed a perpetual
" fund for the support of religion? And are all our pious
" endeavours now frustrated by the dissolute lives of the
" priests? Not that I throw any blame on you: You
" have reasoned, besought, inculcated, inveighed: But
" it behoves you now to use sharper and more vigorous
" remedies; and conjoining your spiritual authority with
" the civil power, to purge effectually the temple of
" God from thieves and intrudersⁿ." It is easy to imagine that this harangue had the desired effect; and that, when the king and prelates thus concurred with the popular prejudices, it was not long before the monks prevailed, and established their new rules in almost all the convents.

Wz

ⁿ Abbas Rieval. p. 360, 361. Spel. Conc. p. 476, 477-478.

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WE may remark, that the declamations against the secular clergy are, both here and in all the historians, conveyed in general terms; and as that order of men are commonly restrained by the decency of their character, not to mention superior motives, it is difficulty to believe that the complaints against their dissolute manners could be universally just as is pretended. It is more probable, that the monks paid court to the populace by an affected austerity of life; and representing the most innocent liberties, taken by the other clergy, as great and unpardonable enormities, thereby prepared the way for the increase of their own power and influence. Edgar, however, like a true politician, concurred with the prevailing party; and he even indulged them in pretensions, which though they might, when complied with, engage the monks to support royal authority during his own reign, proved afterwards very dangerous to his successors, and gave disturbance to the whole civil power. He seconded the policy of the court of Rome, in granting to some monasteries an exemption from episcopal jurisdiction: He allowed the convents, even those of royal foundation, to usurp the election of their own abbot: And he admitted their forgeries of antient charters, by which, from the pretended grant of former kings, they assumed many privileges and exemptions¹.

THESE merits of Edgar have procured him the highest panegyrics from the monks; and he is transmitted to us not only under the character of a consummate statesman and an active prince, praises to which he seems to have been entitled, but under that of a great saint and a man of virtue. But nothing could more betray both his hypocrisy in inyeighing against the licentiousness of the secular clergy, and the interested spirit of his partizans, in bestowing such eulogies on his piety, than the usual tenor of his conduct, which was licentious to the highest degree, and violated every law, human and divine. Yet those very monks, who, as we are told by Ingulf, a very antient historian, had no idea of any moral or religious merit, except chastity and obedience, not only connived at his enormities, but loaded him with the highest praises. History, however, has preserved some instances of his
amours,

¹ Chron. Sax. p. 118. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Seldeni Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 149, 157.

amours, from which, as from a specimen, we may form a conjecture of the rest. CHAP.
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EDGAR broke into a convent, carried off Editha, a nun, by force, and even committed violence on her person^k. For this act of sacrilege and brutality he was reprimanded by Dunstan; and that he might reconcile himself with the church, he was obliged, not to separate from his mistress, but to abstain from wearing his crown during seven years, and to deprive himself so long of that useless ornament^l: A punishment very unequal to that inflicted on the unfortunate Edwy, who for a marriage, which, in the strictest sense, could only deserve the name of irregular, was expelled his kingdom, saw his Queen treated with singular barbarity, was loaded with calumnies, and has been represented to us under the most odious colours. Such is the ascendant which may be attained, by hypocrisy and cabal, over mankind!

THERE was another mistress of Edgar, called Elfreda, with whom he first formed a connexion by a kind of accident. Passing one day by Andover, he lodged in the house of a nobleman, whose daughter, being endowed with all the graces of person and behaviour, enflamed him at first sight with the highest desire, and he resolved by any expedient to gratify it. As he had not leisure to employ courtship or address for attaining his purpose, he went directly to her mother, declared the violence of his passion, and desired that the young lady might be allowed to pass that very night with him. The mother was a woman of virtue, and determined not to dishonour her daughter and her family by compliance; but being well acquainted with the impetuosity of the king's temper, she thought it would be easier as well as safer to deceive than refuse him. She feigned therefore a submission to his will; but secretly ordered a waiting maid, of no disagreeable figure, to steal into the king's bed, after all the company should be retired to rest. In the morning, before day-break, the damsel, agreeably to the injunctions of her mistress, offered to retire; but Edgar, who had no reserve in his pleasures, and whose love to his bed-fellow was rather enflamed by enjoyment, refused his consent, and

^k W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Oiberne, p. 3. Diceto, p. 457. Higden, p. 265, 267, 268. Spel. Conc. p. 481.
^l Oiberne, p. 111.

CHAP. and employed force and entreaties to detain her. Elfreda, II. trusting to her own charms, and to the love with which; she hoped, she had now inspired the king, made probably but a faint resistance; and the return of light discovered the deceit to Edgar. He had passed a night so much to his satisfaction, that he expressed no displeasure with the old lady on account of her fraud; his love was transferred to Elfreda; she became his favourite mistress; and maintained her ascendant over him, till his marriage with Elfrida^M.

THE circumstances of his marriage with this lady were more singular, and more criminal. Elfrida was daughter and heir of Olgar, earl of Devonshire; and though she had been educated in the country, and had never appeared at court, she had filled all England with the reputation of her beauty. Edgar himself, who was indifferent to no accounts of this nature, found his curiosity excited by the frequent panegyrics which he heard of Elfrida; and reflecting on her noble birth, he resolved, if he found her charms answerable to their fame, to obtain possession of her on honourable terms. He communicated his intention to earl Athelwold, his favourite; but used the precaution, before he made any advances to her parents, to order that nobleman, on some pretence, to pay them a visit, and to bring him a certain account of the beauty of their daughter. Athelwold, when introduced to the young lady, found general report to have fallen much short of the truth; and being actuated by the most vehement love, he determined to sacrifice to this new passion all his fidelity to his master, and to the trust reposed in him. He returned to Edgar, and told him, that the riches alone, and high quality of Elfrida, had been the ground of the admiration paid her, and that her charms, far from being any wise extraordinary, would have been overlooked in a woman of inferior station. When he had, by this deceit, diverted the king from his purpose, he took an opportunity, after some interval, of turning again the conversation on Elfrida; and he remarked, that, though the parentage and fortune of the lady had not produced on him, as on others, any illusion with regard to her beauty, he could not forbear reflecting, that she would on the whole be an advantageous match for him, and might, by her

^M W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Higden, p. 268.

her birth and riches, make him a sufficient compensation for the homeliness of her person. If the king, therefore, gave his approbation, he was determined to make proposals in his own behalf to the earl of Devonshire, and doubted not to obtain his, as well as the young lady's consent to the marriage. Edgar, pleased with an expedient for establishing his favourite's fortune, not only exhorted him to execute his purpose, but forwarded its success by his recommendations to the parents of Elfrida; and Athelwold was soon made happy in the possession of his mistress. Dreading, however, the detection of the artifice, he employed every pretence for detaining Elfrida in the country, and for keeping her at a distance from Edgar.

THE violent passion of Athelwold had concealed from him the necessary consequences, which must attend his conduct, and the advantages, which the numerous enemies, that always pursue a royal favourite, would, by its means, be able to make against him. Edgar was soon informed of the truth; but before he would execute vengeance on Athelwold's treachery, he resolved to satisfy himself with his own eyes of the certainty and full extent of his guilt. He told him, that he intended to pay him a visit in his castle, and be introduced to the acquaintance of his new married wife; and Athelwold, as he could not refuse this honour, begged only leave to go before him a few hours, that he might the better prepare every thing for his reception. He then discovered the whole matter to Elfrida; and begged her, if she had any regard, either to her own honour or to his life, to conceal from Edgar, by every circumstance of dress and behaviour, that fatal beauty, which had seduced him from fidelity to his friend, and had betrayed him into so many falsehoods. Elfrida promised compliance, though nothing was farther from her intentions. She deemed herself little beholden to Athelwold for a passion, which had deprived her of a crown; and knowing the force of her own charms, she did not despair even yet of reaching that station, of which her husband's artifice had bereaved her. She appeared before the king with all the advantages, which the richest attire, and the most engaging airs could bestow upon her, and she excited at once in his bosom the highest love towards herself, and the most furious desire of revenge against her husband. He knew, however, how to dissemble these passions; and seducing Athelwold into a wood, on pretence of hunting, he stabbed

CHAP. bed him with his own hand, and soon after publicly
 II. espoused Elfrida^N.

BEFORE we conclude our account of this reign, we must mention two circumstances, which are remarked by historians. The reputation of Edgar allured a great number of foreigners to visit his court; and he gave them encouragement to reside in England^O. We are told, that they imported all the vices of their respective countries, and contributed to corrupt the simple manners of the natives^P: But as this simplicity of manners, so highly and often so injudiciously extolled, preserved them not from barbarity and treachery, the greatest of all vices, and the most incident to a rude uncultivated people, we ought perhaps to deem their acquaintance with foreigners rather an advantage; as it tended to enlarge their views, and to cure them of those illiberal prejudices and rustic manners to which islanders are often subject.

ANOTHER remarkable incident of this reign was the extirpation of wolves from England. This advantage was attained by the industrious policy of Edgar. He took great pains in hunting and pursuing those ravenous animals; and when he found, that they had all taken shelter in the mountains and forests of Wales, he changed the tribute of money imposed on the Welsh princes by Athelstan, his predecessor^Q, into an annual tribute of three hundred heads of wolves; which produced such diligence in hunting them, that the creature has been no more seen in this island.

EDGAR died, after a reign of sixteen years, and in the thirty-third of his age. He was succeeded by Edward, whom he had by his first marriage with the daughter of Earl Ordmer^R.

EDWARD

^N W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 426. Brompton, p. 865, 866. Flor. Wigorn. p. 606. Higden, p. 268.

^O Chron. Sax. p. 116. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356. Brompton, p. 865.

^P W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. ^Q W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 6. Brompton, p. 838. ^R W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 426. Knighton, p. 2313.

E D W A R D the Martyr.

THE succession of this prince, who was only fifteen years of age at his father's death, did not take place without much difficulty and opposition. Elfrida, his step-mother, had a son, Ethelred, seven years old, whom she attempted to raise to the throne: She affirmed, that Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward, was exposed to insuperable objections; and as she had possessed great credit with her husband, she had found means to acquire partizans, who seconded all her pretensions. But the title of Edward was supported by many advantages. He was appointed successor by the will of his father^s: He was approaching to man's estate, and might soon be able to take into his own hands the reins of government: The principal nobility, dreading the imperious temper of Elfrida, were averse to her son's government, which must enlarge her authority, if not put her in possession of the regency: And above all, Dunstan whose character of sanctity had given him the highest credit with the people, had espoused the cause of Edward, over whom he had already acquired a great ascendant^t, and he was determined to execute the will of Edgar in his favour. To cut off all pretensions, Dunstan resolutely anointed and crowned the young prince at Kingston; and the whole kingdom, without farther opposition, submitted to him^u.

C H A P.
II.
957.

It was of great importance to Dunstan and the monks, to place on the throne a king favourable to their cause: The secular clergy had still partizans in England, who desired to keep them in possession of the convents, and of the ecclesiastical authority. On the first intelligence of Edgar's death, Alfere, duke of Mercia, expelled the new orders of monks from all the monasteries which lay within his jurisdiction^x; but Elfwin, duke of East-Anglia, and Brithnot, duke of the East-Saxons, protected them withia

^s Hoveden, p. 427. Eadmer, p. 3. ^t Eadmer, ex edit. Seldeni, p. 3. ^u W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. Osberne, p. 113. Gervasi, p. 1647. Knighton, p. 2313. Brompton, p. 872. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 29. ^x Chron. Sax. p. 123. W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. Brompton, 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607.

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II.

within their territories, and insisted upon the execution of the late laws enacted in their favour^Y. In order to settle this controversy, there were summoned several synods, which, according to the practice of those times, consisted partly of ecclesiastical members, partly of the lay nobility. The monks were able to prevail in these assemblies; though as it appears contrary to the secret wishes, if not the declared inclination, of the leading men in the nation^Z. They had more invention in forging miracles to support their cause; or having been so fortunate as to obtain, by their pretended austerities, the character of piety, their miracles were better credited by the populace.

In one synod, Dunstan, finding the majority of votes against him, rose up, and informed the audience, that he had, in that instant, received an immediate revelation in behalf of the monks; and the assembly was so astonished at this intelligence, or probably so overawed by the populace, that they proceeded no farther in their deliberations. In another synod, a voice issued from the crucifix, and informed the members, that the establishment of the monks was founded on the will of heaven, and could not be opposed without impiety^A. But the miracle performed in the third synod was still more alarming: The floor of the hall in which the assembly met, sunk of a sudden, and a great number of the members were either bruised or killed by the fall. It was remarked, that Dunstan had prevented that day the king from attending the synod, and that the beam on which his own chair stood, was the only one which did not sink under the weight of the assembly^B: But these circumstances, instead of begetting any suspicion of contrivance, were regarded as the surest proof of the immediate interposition of Providence in behalf of these favourites of heaven.

EDWARD lived four years after his accession, and there passed nothing remarkable during his reign. His death was

^Y Hoveden, p. 427. Brömpton, p. 870. Higden, p. 269.

^Z W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9.

^A W. Malmesb. lib. 2.

cap. 9. Osborne, p. 112. Gervase, p. 1647. Brömpton,

p. 870. Higden, p. 269. ^B Chron. Sax. p. 124. W.

Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. H. Hunting. lib.

5. p. 357. Gervase, p. 1647. Brömpton, p. 870. Flor. Wig.

990. p. 697. Higden, p. 269. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de

Burgo, p. 29.

was memorable and tragical^C. This young prince was CHAP. endowed with the most amiable innocence of manners; II. and as his own intentions were always pure, he was incapable of entertaining any suspicion against others. Though his stepmother had opposed his succession, and had raised a party in favour of her own son, he always shewed her marks of the greatest regard, and even expressed, on all occasions, the most tender affection towards his brother^D. He was hunting one day in a forest in Dorsetshire; and being led by the chase near Corfe-castle, where Elfrida resided, he took the opportunity of paying her a visit, unattended by any of his retinue, and he thereby presented her with the occasion, which she had long wished for. After he had mounted his horse, he desired some liquor to be brought him; and while he was holding the cup to his head, a servant of Elfrida approached him, and gave him a stab behind. The prince, finding himself wounded, put spurs to his horse; but becoming faint by the loss of blood, he fell from the saddle, his foot stuck in the stirrup, and he was dragged along by his unruly horse, till he expired^E. Being tracked by the blood, his body was found, and was privately interred at Wretham by his servants.

THE youth and innocence of this prince, with his tragical death, begot such compassion among the people, that they believed miracles to be wrought at his tomb^F; and they gave him the appellation of Martyr, though his murder had no connexion with any religious principle or opinion. Elfrida built monasteries, and performed many penances, in order to atone for her guilt^G, but could never, by all her hypocrisy or remorse, recover the good opinion of the public, though so easily deluded in those ignorant ages.

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^C Chron. Sax. p. 124. ^D W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9. Brompton, p. 873. Matth. West. p. 193. Wallingford, p. 545. ^E W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. Gervase, p. 1647. Knighton, p. 2313. Brompton, p. 873. ^F W. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 9. Knighton, p. 2313. Brompton, p. 874, 875, 876. Matth. West. p. 194. Higden, p. 269. ^G Knighton, p. 2313, 2314. Brompton, p. 876.

C H A P. III.

*Estelred—Settlement of the Normans—Edmund Iron-
side—Canute the Great—Harold Harefoot—
Hardicanute—Edward the Confessor—Harold.*

E T H E L R E D.

CHAP. II. **T**HE freedom which England had so long enjoyed from the depredations of the Danes, seems to have proceeded, partly from the establishments which that pyrratical nation had obtained in the north of France, and which employed all their superfluous hands to people and maintain them; partly from the vigour and warlike spirit of a long race of English princes, who preserved the country in a posture of defence by sea and land, and either prevented or repelled every attempt of the invaders. But a new generation of men being now sprung up in the northern regions, who could no longer disburthen themselves on Normandy; the English had reason to dread, that they would again visit an island, to which they were invited, both by the memory of their past successes, and by the expectation of assistance from their countrymen, who, though long established in the kingdom, were not yet thoroughly united with the natives, nor had entirely forgot their inveterate habits of war and depredation. And as the present king was a minor, and even when he attained to man's estate, never discovered either courage or capacity sufficient to govern his own subjects, much less to repel a formidable enemy, the people might justly expect to suffer the worst calamities from so dangerous a crisis.

981. **T**HE Danes, before they durst attempt any important enterprize against England, made a small incursion, by way of trial; and having landed from seven vessels near Southampton, they ravaged the country, enriched themselves by spoil, and departed with impunity¹. Six years after, they made a like attempt in the west, and met with like success²; and the invaders, having now found affairs

¹ Chron. Sax. p. 125. H. Hunt. p. 357. Hoveden, p. 427. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 30. Sim. Dun. p. 161. Brompton, p. 875. ² Chron. Sax. p. 126. Hoveden, p. 427. Sim. Dun. p. 161.

affairs in a very different situation from that in which they formerly appeared, encouraged their countrymen to assemble a greater force, and to hope for more considerable advantages. They landed in Essex under the command of two chieftains; and having defeated and slain at Maldon, Brithnot, duke of that county^L, who ventured with a small force to attack them, they spread their devastations over all the neighbouring provinces. In this extremity, Ethelred, to whom historians give the epithet of the *Unready*^M, instead of rousing his people to defend with courage their honour and their property, hearkened to the advice of Siricius, archbishop of Canterbury, which was seconded by many of the degenerate nobility; and paying the enemy the sum of ten thousand pounds, he bribed them to depart the kingdom^N. This shameful expedient was attended with the success which might be expected. The Danes appeared next year off the eastern-coast, in hopes of subduing a people, who defended themselves by their money, which invited assailants, instead of their arms, which repelled them. But the English, sensible of their folly, had, in the interval, met in a great council, and had determined to assemble at London a fleet capable of repulsing the enemy^O; though that judicious measure failed of success from the treachery of Alfric, duke of Mercia, whose name is infamous in the annals of that age, by the calamities which his repeated perfidy brought upon his country. This nobleman had, in 983, succeeded to his father, Alfer, in that extensive command; but being deprived of it two years after, and banished the kingdom^P, he was obliged to employ all his intrigue, and all his power, which was too great for a subject, to be restored to his country, and reinstated in his authority. Having had experience of the credit and malevolence of his enemies, he thenceforth trusted for security, not to his services, or to the affections of his fellow-citizens, but to the influence which he had obtained over his vassals; and to the public calamities, which, he thought, must, in every revolution, render his assistance necessary. Hav-

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I

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^L H. Hunt. p. 357. Hoveden, p. 428. ^M Anglo-Sax-
cra, vol. 1. p. 225. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 126. W. Malm.
p. 62. H. Hunt. p. 357. Hoveden, p. 428. ^O Chron.
Sax. p. 126. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 125. Chron. St. Petri de
Burgo, p. 31. Brompton, p. 879.

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III

ing fixed this resolution, he determined to prevent all such successes as might establish the royal authority, or render his own situation dependant or precarious. As the English had formed the plan of surrounding and destroying the Danish fleet in the harbour, he privately informed the enemy of their danger; and when they put to sea, in consequence of this intelligence, he deserted, with the squadron under his command, the night before the engagement, and thereby disappointed all the efforts of his countrymen^Q. Ethelred, enraged at his perfidy, took his son, Alfgar, and ordered his eyes to be put out^R. But such was the power of Alfric, that he again forced him into authority^S, and tho' he had given this specimen of his character, and received this grievous provocation, it was found necessary to entrust him anew with the government of Mercia. This conduct of the court, which, in all its circumstances, is so barbarous, imprudent, and weak, both merited and prognosticated the most grievous calamities.

THE northern invaders, now well acquainted with the defenceless condition of England, made a powerful descent, under the command of Swein, king of Denmark, and Olave, king of Norway; and sailing up the Humber, spread on all sides their destructive ravages. Lindsey was laid waste; Banbury was destroyed^T; and all the Northumbrians, though mostly of Danish descent, were obliged either to join the victors, or to suffer under their depredations. A powerful army was assembled to oppose the invaders, and a general action ensued; but the English were abandoned in the battle, by the cowardice or treachery of their three leaders, all of them men of Danish race, Frena, Frithegist, and Godwin, who gave the example of a shameful flight to the troops under their command^U.

ENCOURAGED by this success, and still more by the contempt which it inspired of their enemy, the pirates ventured to attack the center of the kingdom; and entering

^Q Chron. Sax. p. 127. W. Malm. p. 62. Higden, p. 270. ^R Chron. Sax. p. 128. W. Malm. p. 62. H. Hunt. p. 358. Higden, p. 270. ^S H. Hunt p. 357. Higden, p. 270. ^T Chron. Muir. p. 152. Sim. Dun. p. 162. ^U Chron. Sax. p. 128. H. Hunt. p. 357. Flores. p. 428. Brompton, p. 880.

tering the Thames in ninety-four vessels, laid siege to London, and threatened it with total destruction. But the citizens, alarmed with the danger, and firmly united among themselves, made a bolder defence than the cowardice of the nobility and gentry gave the invaders reason to apprehend^x; and the besiegers, after suffering the greatest hardships, were finally frustrated in their attempt. In order to revenge themselves, they laid waste Essex, Sussex, and Hampshire; and having there procured horses, they were thereby enabled to spread, into the more inland counties, the fury of their depredations^y. In this extremity, Ethelred and his nobles had recourse to the former expedient; and sending ambassadors to the two northern kings, they promised them subsistence and tribute, on condition they would, for the present, put an end to their ravages, and soon after depart the kingdom. Sweyn and Olave agreed to the terms, and peaceably took up their quarters at Southampton, where the sum of sixteen thousand pounds was paid them^z. Olave even made a journey to Andover, where Ethelred resided; and he received the rite of confirmation from the English bishops, as well as many rich presents from the king. He here promised, that he would never more infest the English territories, and he faithfully fulfilled that engagement^a. This prince receives the appellation of St. Olave from the church of Rome; and notwithstanding the general presumption, which lies, either against the understanding or morals of every one, who in those ignorant ages was dignified with that title, he seems to have been a man of merit and of virtue. Sweyn, though less scrupulous than Olave, was obliged, upon the departure of the Norwegian prince, to evacuate also the kingdom with all his followers.

THIS composition brought but a short interval to the miseries of the English. The Danish pirates appeared soon after in the Severne; and having committed spoil

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^x W. Malm. p. 63. H. Hunt. p. 358. Hoveden, p. 428.

^y Chron. Sax. p. 128. W. Malm. p. 63. H. Hunt. p. 358. Hoveden, p. 428. Sim. Dun. p. 162, 163.

^z Chron. Sax. p. 129. Hoveden, p. 428. Chron. Mailr. p. 152. ^a Chron. Sax. p. 129. H. Hunt. p. 358. Hoveden, p. 428. Chron. Mailr. p. 152. Sim. Dun. p. 163. Brompton, p. 880.

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in Wales, as well as in Cornwall and Devon, they sailed round to the south-coast, and entering the Tamar, completed the devastation of these two counties. They then returned to the Bristol-channel; and penetrating into the country by the Avon, spread themselves over all that neighbourhood, and carried fire and sword even into Dorsetshire^B. They next changed the seat of war; and after ravaging the Isle of Wight, they entered the Thames, and Medway, and laid siege to Rochester, where they defeated the Kentish-men in a great battle^C. After this victory, the whole province of Kent was made a scene of slaughter, fire and devastation. The extremity of these miseries forced the English into councils for common defence both by sea and land; but the weakness of the king, the divisions among the nobility, the treachery of some, the cowardice of others, the want of concert of all, frustrated every endeavour; and their fleets and armies either came too late to attack the enemy, or were repulsed with dishonour; and the people were thus equally ruined by resistance or submission^D. The English, therefore, devoid both of prudence and unanimity in council, of courage and conduct in the field, had recourse to the same weak expedient, which by experience they might have already found so ineffectual; and they offered the Danes to buy peace by paying them a large sum of money. These ravagers rose continually in their demands; and now required the payment of 24,000 l. which the English were so mean and imprudent as to submit to^E. The departure of the Danes procured them a short interval of repose, which they enjoyed as if it were to be perpetual, without making any effectual preparations for giving them a more vigorous reception upon their next return.

BESIDES receiving this sum, the Danes were engaged by another circumstance to depart a kingdom, which appeared so little in a situation to resist their efforts: They were invited over by their countrymen in Normandy, who

^B Chron. Sax. p. 129. Hoveden, p. 428. Sim. Dun. 163.

^C H. Humph. 358. Hoveden, p. 429. Chron. Mailr. p. 153. Brompton, p. 882. ^D Chron. Sax. p. 129. 230.

W. Malm. p. 63. Hoveden, p. 429. Higden, p. 271. Sim. Dun. p. 164. ^E Hoveden, p. 429. Chron. Mailr. p. 153. Sim.

Dun. p. 164. Diceto, p. 461.

who at this time were hard pressed by the arms of Robert, king of France, and who found it difficult to defend the settlement, which with so much advantage to themselves and glory to their nation, they had made in that country. It is probable, also, that Ethelréd, observing the close connexions, thus maintained among all the Danes, however divided in government or situation, was desirous of procuring an alliance with that formidable people; and for this purpose, being now a widower, he made his addresses to Emma, sister to Richard II, duke of Normandy, and he soon succeeded in his negotiations. The princess came over this year to England, and was married to Ethelréd^F.

1001.

IN the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth Settlement century; when the north, not yet exhausted by that multitude of people or rather nations, whom she had successively emitted, sent forth a new race, not of conquerors, as before, but of pirates and ravagers, who infested the countries, possessed by her once warlike sons; there lived Rollo, a petty prince or chieftain in Denmark, whose valour and abilities soon drew the attention of his countrymen. He was exposed in his youth to the jealousy of the king of Denmark, who attacked his small, but independent principality; and who being foiled in every assault, had recourse at last to perfidy for effectuating his purpose, which he had so often attempted in vain by force of arms^G: He lulled Rollo into security by an insidious peace; and falling suddenly upon him, he murdered his brother and his bravest officers, and forced him to fly for safety into Scandinavia. Here many of his antient subjects, induced partly by affection to their prince, partly by the oppressions of the Danish monarchy, ranged themselves under his standard, and offered to follow him in every enterprize. Rollo, instead of attempting to recover his paternal dominions, where he must expect a vigorous resistance from the Danes, determined to pursue an easier, but more important undertaking, and to make his fortune, in imitation of his countrymen, by pillaging the richer and more southern coasts of Europe. He collected a body of troops, which like that of all these ravagers, was composed of Norwegians, Swedes, Frisians, Danes, and

^F H. Hunt. p. 359. Higden, p. 271. ^G Dudo ex edit. Duchesne, p. 70, 71. Gul. Gemeticenis, lib. 2. cap. 2, 3.

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and adventurers of all nations, who, being accustomed to a roving, unsettled life, took delight in nothing but war and plunder. His reputation drew him associates from all quarters; and a vision which he pretended appeared to him in his sleep, and which according to his interpretation of it, prognosticated to him the greatest successes, proved also a powerful incentive with those ignorant and superstitious people.^H

THE first attempt of Rollo was on England, near the end of Alfred's reign; when that great monarch, having settled Guthrun and his followers in East-Anglia, and others of these free-booters in Northumberland, and having restored peace to his harassed country, had established the most excellent military, as well as civil institutions among the English. The prudent Dane, finding that no advantages could be gained, over such a people, governed by such a prince, soon turned his enterprizes against France, which he found more exposed to his inroads;^I and during the reigns of Eudes, an usurper, and of Charles the Simple, a weak prince, he committed the most destructive ravages on both the inland, and maritime provinces of that kingdom. The French, having no means of defence against a chieftain, who united all the valour of his countrymen with the policy of more civilized nations, were obliged to submit to the expedient practised by Alfred, and to offer the invaders a settlement in some of those provinces, which they had depopulated by their armies.^K

THE reason why the Danes for many years pursued measures so different from those embraced by the Goths, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, and other northern conquerors, was the great difference, in the method of attack which was practised by these several nations, and to which the nature of their particular situations necessarily confined them. The latter tribes, living in an inland country, made incursions by land upon the Roman empire; and when they entered far into the frontiers, they were obliged to carry along with them their wives and families, whom they had no hopes of soon re-visiting, and who could not otherwise participate of their plunder. This circumstance quickly made them think

^H Dudo, p. 71. Gul. Gem. in epist. ad Gul. Conq.

^I Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 6. ^K Dudo, p. 84.

think of forcing a settlement in the provinces, which they had over-run; and these barbarians, spreading themselves over the country, found an interest in protecting the property and industry of the people, whom they subdued. But the Danes and Norwegians, invited by their maritime situation, and obliged to maintain themselves in their uncultivated country by fishing, had acquired some experience of navigation; and in their military excursions pursued the method practised against the Roman empire by the more early Saxons: They made descents in small bodies from their ships or rather boats, and ravaging the coasts, returned with the booty to their families, whom they could not conveniently carry along with them in these hazardous enterprizes. But when they increased their armaments, made incursions into the inland countries, and found it safe to remain longer in the midst of the enfeebled enemy, they had been accustomed to crowd their vessels with their wives and children, and having no longer any temptation to return into their own country, they willingly embraced an opportunity of settling in the warm climates and cultivated fields of the south.

AFFAIRS were in this situation with Rollo and his followers, when Charles proposed to relinquish to them the province formerly called Neustria, and to purchase peace of them on these hard conditions. After all the terms were fully agreed, there appeared only one circumstance shocking to the haughty Dane: He was required to do homage to Charles for his province, and to put himself in that humiliating posture, imposed on vassals by the rites of the feudal law. He long refused to submit to this indignity; but being unwilling to lose such important advantages for a mere ceremony, he made a sacrifice of his pride to his interest, and acknowledged himself in form the vassal of the French monarch^u. Charles gave him his daughter, Gisla, in marriage; and that he might bind him faster to his interests, made him a donation of a considerable territory, besides what he was obliged to surrender him by his stipulations. When some of the French nobles informed him, that, in return for so generous a present, it was expected, that he should throw himself at the king's feet, and make suitable acknowledgments for his bounty; Rollo replied, that he would rather

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III.

ther break off the whole treaty; and it was with some difficulty they could persuade him to make that compliment by one of his captains. The Dane, commissioned for this purpose, full of indignation at the order, and despising so unwarlike a prince, caught Charles by the foot, and pretending to carry it to his mouth, that he might kiss it, overthrew him before all his courtiers. The French nation, sensible of their present weakness, found it prudent to overlook this insult^l.

ROLLO, who was now in the decline of life, and was tired of wars and depredations, applied himself with mature councils to the settlement of his new acquired territory, which was thenceforth called Normandy; and he parcelled it out among his captains and followers. He followed in this partition the customs of the feudal law, which was then universally established in the southern countries of Europe, and which suited the peculiar circumstances of that age. He treated the French subjects who submitted to him, with mildness and justice; he reclaimed his antient followers from their ferocity and violence; he established law and order throughout his state; and after a life, spent in tumults and ravages, he died peaceably in a good old age, and left his dominions to his posterity^k.

WILLIAM I. who succeeded him, governed the dutchy for twenty-five years; and during this time, the Normans were thoroughly intermingled with the French, had acquired their language, had imitated their manners, and had made such a progress towards cultivation, that, on the death of William, his son, Richard, though a minor^l, inherited his dominions: A certain proof, that the Normans were already well advanced in civility, and that their government could now rest secure on its laws and civil institutions, and was not wholly sustained by the abilities of the Sovereign. Richard, after a long reign of fifty-four years, was succeeded by his son of the same name in the year 996^m; which was eighty-five years after the first establishment of the Normans in France. This was the duke who gave his sister, Emma, in marriage to Ethelred, king of England, and who thereby formed connections

^l Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 17.

cap. 19, 20, 21.

lib. 4. cap. 1.

^k Gul. Gemet. lib. 2.

^l Order. Vitalis, p. 459. Gul. Gemet.

^m Order. Vitalis, p. 459.

nexions with a country, which his posterity was so soon after destined to subdue. CHAP. III.

THE Danes had been established during a longer period in England than in France; and though the similarity of their original language to that of the Saxons invited them to a more early coalition with the natives, they had found, as yet, so little example of civilized manners among the English, that they retained all their antient ferocity, and valued themselves only on their national character of military bravery. The recent, as well as more ancient achievements of their countrymen, tended to support this idea; and the English princes, particularly Athelstan and Edgar, sensible of that superiority, had been accustomed to keep in pay bodies of Danish troops, who were quartered about the country, and committed many violences upon the inhabitants. These mercenaries had attained to such a height of luxury, according to the old English writers^M, that they combed their hair once a day, bathed themselves once a week, changed their cloaths frequently; and by all these arts of effeminacy, as well as by their military character, had rendered themselves so agreeable to the fair sex, that they debauched the wives and daughters of the English, and had dishonoured many families. But what most provoked the inhabitants, was, that, instead of defending them against invaders, they were ever ready to betray them to the foreign Danes, and to associate themselves with all the straggling parties of that nation. The animosity between the inhabitants of English and Danish race, had, from these repeated injuries, risen to a great height; when Ethelred, from a policy incident to weak princes, embraced the cruel resolution of massacring the latter throughout all his dominions^N. Secret orders

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Nov. 13.

^M Wallingford, p. 547.

^N Almost all the antient historians speak of this massacre of the Danes as if it had been universal, and as if every individual of that nation throughout England had been put to death. But the Danes were almost the sole inhabitants in the kingdoms of Northumberland and East-Anglia, and were very numerous in Mercia. This representation of the matter is absolutely impossible. Great resistance must have been made, and violent wars ensued; which was not the case. This account given by Wallingford, though he stands single, must be admitted as the only true one. We are told, that the name *Lurdane*, *lord Dane*, for

CHAP. orders were dispatched to commence the execution every where on the same day; and the festival of St. Brice, which fell on a Sunday, the day on which the Danes usually bathed themselves, was chosen for that purpose. It is needless to repeat the accounts transmitted of the barbarity of this massacre: The rage of the populace, excited by so many injuries, sanctified by authority, and stimulated by example, distinguished not between innocence and guilt, spared neither sex nor age, and was not satiated without the tortures, as well as death, of the unhappy victims^O. Even Gunilda, sister to the king of Denmark, who had married earl Paling, and had embraced Christianity, was, from the advice of Edric, earl of Wilts, seized and condemned to death by Ethelred, after seeing her husband and children butchered before her face. This unhappy princess foretold, in the agonies of despair, that her murder would soon be avenged by the total ruin of the English nation^P.

1003. NEVER was prophecy better fulfilled; and never did barbarous policy prove more fatal to the actors. Sweyn and his Danes, who wanted but a pretence to invade the English, appeared off the western coast, and threatened to take full revenge for the slaughter of their countrymen. Exeter fell first into their hands, from the negligence or treachery of earl Hugh, a Norman, who had been made governor by the interest of queen Emma^Q. They began to spread their devastations over the country; when the English, sensible of what outrages they must now expect from their barbarous and offended enemy, assembled more early and in greater numbers, than usual, and made an appearance of vigorous resistance. But all these preparations were frustrated by the treachery of duke Alfrie, who
was

for an idle lazy fellow, who lives at other people's expence, came from the conduct of the Danes, who were put to death. But the English princes had been entirely masters for several generations; and only supported a military corps of that nation. It seems probable, therefore, that it was these Danes only that were put to death.

^O W. Malm. p. 64. H. Hunt. p. 360. Hoveden, p. 429. Higden, p. 271. Abbas Rieval, p. 362. Brompton, p. 885. Math. West. p. 200. Ypod. Neust. p. 427. ^P W. Malm. p. 69. ^Q Chron. Sax. p. 133. H. Hunt, p. 360. Hoveden, p. 429. Sim. Dun. p. 165.

was intrusted with the command, and who, feigning sickness, refused to lead the army against the Danes till it was dispirited, and at least dissipated, by his fatal misconduct^R. Alfric soon after died; and Edric, a greater traitor than he, who had married the king's daughter, and had acquired a total ascendant over him, succeeded Alfric in the government of Mercia, and in the command of the English armies^S. A great famine, proceeding partly from the bad seasons, partly from the decay of agriculture, added to all the other miseries of the inhabitants^T. The country, wasted by the Danes, harassed by the fruitless expeditions of its own forces, was reduced to the utmost desolation; and at last submitted to the infamy of purchasing a precarious peace from the enemy, by the payment of 30,000 pounds^U.

1007.

THE English endeavoured to employ this interval in making preparations against the return of the Danes, which they had reason soon to expect. A law was made, ordering the proprietors of eight hydes of land to provide themselves of a horseman and a compleat suit of armour; and those of 310 hydes to equip a ship for the defence of the coast^X. When this navy was assembled, which must have consisted of near eight hundred vessels^Y, all hopes of its success were disappointed by the factions, animosities, and dissensions of the nobility. Edric had impelled his brother Brightic to advance an accusation of treason against Wolfnoth, governor of Suffex, the father of the famous earl Godwin; and that nobleman, well acquainted with the malevolence as well as power of his enemy, found no other means of safety but in deserting with twenty ships to the Danes. Brightic pursued him with a fleet of eighty sail; but his ships being shattered in a tempest, and stranded

^R Chron. Sax. p. 133. H. Hunt. p. 360. Hoveden, p. 429. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 33. Sim. Dun. p. 165. Brompton, p. 885. ^S W. Malm. p. 63. Hoveden, p. 430.

Chron. Mail. p. 154. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 133. W. Malm. p. 63. H. Hunt. p. 360. ^U Chron. Sax. p. 136. W.

Malm. p. 63. H. Hunt. p. 360. Hoveden, p. 430. Higden, p. 272. ^X Chron. Sax. p. 136. H. Hunt. p. 360. Hoveden, p. 430. Sim. Dun. p. 166. Brompton, p. 887. Math. West. p. 198. Flor. Wigorn. p. 612.

^Y There were 243,600 hydes in England. Consequently the ships equipped must be 785. The cavalry was 30,450 men.

CHAP. III. stranded on the coast, he was suddenly attacked by Wolfnoth, and all his vessels burnt and destroyed^z. The imbecility of the king was little capable of repairing this miscarriage: The treachery of Edric frustrated every plan of future defence^A: And the English navy, disconcerted, discouraged, and divided, was at last scattered into its several harbours^B.

It is impossible, or would be tedious, to relate particularly all the miseries to which the English were thenceforth exposed. We hear of nothing but the sacking and burning of towns; the devastations of the open country; the appearance of the enemy in every quarter of the kingdom; their cruel diligence in discovering any corner which had not been ransacked by their former violence. The broken and disjointed narration of the antient historians is here well adapted to the nature of the war, which was conducted by such sudden inroads, as would have been dangerous even to an united and well governed kingdom, but proved fatal, where nothing but a general consternation, and mutual diffidence and dissention prevailed. The governors of one province refused to march to the assistance of another, and were at last terrified from assembling their forces for the defence of their own province^C. General councils were summoned; but either no resolution was taken, or none was executed. And the only expedient, in which the English agreed, was the base and imprudent one, of buying anew a peace of the Danes by the payment of 48,000 pounds^D.

1011. THIS measure did not bring them even that short interval of repose which they had expected from it. The Danes, neglecting all engagements, continued their devastations and hostilities; levied a new contribution of 8000 pounds from the county of Kent alone; murdered the archbishop of Canterbury, who had refused to countenance this exaction^E; and the English nobility found no other resource than that of submitting every where to the Danish monarch, swearing allegiance to him, and delivering

^z Chron. Sax. p. 137. W. Malm. p. 63. Hoveden. p. 430. Sim. Dun. p. 166. ^A Hoveden, p. 431. Sim.

Dun. p. 167. Brompton, p. 887. ^B H. Hunt. p. 361.

^C Chron. Sax. p. 140. ^D Hoveden, p. 432. Chron.

Mail. p. 154. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 35. Sim. Dun.

p. 169. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 142. Eadmer, p. 4.

ing him hostages for their good behaviour^F. Ethelred, equally afraid of the violence of the enemy, and the treachery of his own subjects, fled into Normandy, whither he had sent before him queen Emma, and her two sons, Alfred and Edward^G. Richard received his unhappy guests with a generosity which does honour to his memory.

THE king had not been above six weeks in Normandy, when he heard of the death of Sweyn, who expired at Gainsborough, before he had time to establish himself in his new-acquired dominions^H. The English prelates and nobility, taking advantage of this event, sent over a deputation to Normandy, inviting Ethelred to return to them, expressing a desire of being governed again by their native prince, and intimating their hopes, that, being now better taught by experience, he would avoid all those errors, which had been attended with such misfortunes to himself and to his people^I. But the misconduct of Ethelred was incurable; and on his resuming the government, he discovered the same incapacity, indolence, cowardice, and credulity, which had so often exposed him to the insults of his enemies. His son-in-law, Edric, notwithstanding his repeated treasons, retained such influence at court, as to insil into the king jealousies of Sigefert and Morcar, two of the chief nobles of Mercia: Edric allured them into his house, where he murdered them^K; while Ethelred participated in the infamy of this action, by confiscating their estates, and thrusting into a convent the widow of Sigefert. She was a woman of singular beauty and merit; and in a visit which was paid her, during her confinement, by prince Edmond, the king's eldest son, she inspired him with so violent an affection, that he released her from the convent, and soon after married her without his father's consent^L.

MEAN while the English found in Canute, the son and successor of Sweyn, an enemy no less terrible than the prince, from whom death had so lately delivered them.

^F Sim. Dun. p. 169, 170. ^G Chron. Sax. p. 144. W. Malm. p. 70. ^H Sim. Dun. p. 170. ^I Chron. Sax. p. 145. W. Malmes. p. 71. Hoveden, p. 433. Higden, p. 273. Sim. Dun. p. 171. Diceto, p. 466. Alured Beverl. p. 115. ^K W. Malmes. p. 71. H. Hunt. p. 362. Hoveden, p. 433. Sim. Dun. p. 171. Brompton, p. 892, 893. ^L W. Malm. p. 71.

CHAP.
III.

them. He ravaged the eastern coast with merciless fury, and put ashore all the English hostages at Sandwich, after having cut off their hands and noses^M. He was obliged, by the necessity of his affairs, to make a voyage to Denmark; but returning soon after, he continued his depredations along the southern coast; and even broke into the counties of Dorset, Wilts, and Somerset; where an army was assembled against him, under the command of prince Edmond and duke Edric. The latter still continued his perfidious machinations; and after endeavouring in vain to get the prince into his power, found means to dissipate the army, and he then openly deserted to Canute with forty vessels^N.

NOTWITHSTANDING this misfortune, Edmond was not disconcerted; but assembling together all the force of England, was in a condition to give the enemy battle. The king had had such frequent experience of perfidy among his subjects, that he had lost all confidence in them; and he remained at London, pretending sickness, but really from apprehensions, that they intended to buy their peace, by delivering him into the hands of his enemies^O. The army called aloud for their sovereign to march at their head against the Danes; and on his refusal to take the field, they were so discouraged, that these vast preparations became ineffectual for the defence of the kingdom^P. Edmond, deprived of all regular resources to maintain the soldiers, was obliged to commit equal ravages with those practised by the Danes^Q; and after making some fruitless expeditions into the north, which had submitted entirely to Canute's power, he retired to London, determined there to maintain to the last extremity the small remains of English liberty. He here found every thing in confusion by the death of the king, who expired after an unhappy and inglorious reign of thirty-five years. He left two sons by his first marriage, Edmond, who succeeded him, and Edwy, whom Canute afterwards murdered^R. His two sons by the second marriage, Alfred and

1016.

^M Chron. Sax. p. 145. W. Malm. p. 71. Hoveden, p. 433. Higden, p. 273. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 146. W. Malm. p. 71. H. Hunt. p. 362. Hoveden, p. 433. ^O Sim. Dun. p. 172. Brompton, p. 893. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 147. Hoveden, p. 434. Sim. Dun. p. 172. ^Q Chron. Sax. p. 147. Hoveden, p. 434. ^R Hoveden, p. 436. Chron. Mailr. p. 155.

and Edward, were immediately upon Ethelred's death, CHAP.
conveyed into Normandy by queen Emma. III.

EDMOND Ironside.

THIS prince, who received the name of Ironside from his hardy valour, possessed courage and abilities, sufficient to have saved his country from sinking into these calamities, but not to raise it from that abyss of misery into which it had already fallen. Among the other misfortunes of the English, treachery and disaffection had crept in among the nobility and prelates; and Edmond found no better expedient to prevent the further progress of these fatal evils, than to lead his army instantly into the field, and to employ them against the common enemy. After meeting with some success at Gillingham^s, he prepared himself in one general engagement to decide the fate of his crown, and at Scoerston, in the county of Gloucester, he offered battle to the enemy, who were commanded by Canute and Edric. Fortune in the beginning of the day declared for him; but Edric, having cut off the head of one Osmer, whose countenance resembled that of Edmond, fixed it on a spear, carried it through the ranks in triumph, and called aloud to the English, that it was time for them to fly; for behold! the head of their sovereign^t. And though Edmond, observing the consternation of the troops, took off his helmet^u, and shewed himself to them, the utmost he could gain by his activity and valour was to leave the victory undecided. Edric took now a surer method to ruin him, by pretending to desert to him; and as Edmond was well acquainted with his power, and probably knew no other of the chief nobility in whom he could repose more confidence, he was obliged, notwithstanding the repeated perfidy of the man, to give him a considerable command in the royal army^x. A battle soon after ensued at Assington in Essex; where Edric, flying in the beginning of the day, occasioned the total defeat of the English, followed by a great slaughter of

^s W. Malm. p. 72. H. Hunt. p. 363. Hoveden, p. 434.
Higden, p. 273. ^t W. Malm. p. 72. Hoveden, p. 435.
Higden, p. 273. ^u W. Malm. p. 72. ^x W. Malm. p.
72. Hoveden, p. 435.

CHAP.

III.

of the nobility^Y. The indefatigable Edmond, however, had still resources; and assembling a new army at Gloucester, was again in a condition to dispute the field; when the Danish and English nobility, equally harassed with these convulsions, obliged their kings to come to a compromise, and to divide the kingdom between them by treaty. Canute reserved to himself the northern division of Mercia, East-Anglia, and Northumberland, which he had entirely subdued: The southern parts were left to Edmond^Z. This prince survived the treaty about a month; and was murdered at Oxford by two of his chamberlains, accomplices of Edric^A, who thereby made way for the succession of Canute the Dane to the crown of England.

CANUTE the Great.

1017.

THE English, who had been unable to defend their country, and maintain their independency, under so active and brave a prince as Edmond, could, after his death, expect nothing but total subjection from Canute, who, active and brave himself, and at the head of a great force, was ready to take advantage of the minority of Edwin and Edward, the two sons of Edmond. Yet this conqueror, who was commonly so little scrupulous, shewed himself anxious to cover his injustice under plausible pretences; and before he seized the dominions of the English princes, he summoned a general assembly of the states of England, in order to fix the succession of the kingdom. He here suborned some nobles to depose, that in the treaty of Gloucester, it was verbally agreed, that in case of Edmond's death, Canute should either be his successor in his dominions, or be tutor to his children^B (for historians vary in this particular:) And this evidence, supported by the great power of Canute, determined the states immediately to put the Danish monarch in possession of the government. Canute, jealous of the two young

^Y W. Malm. p. 72. Hoveden, p. 435. Higden, p. 274. Wallingford, p. 549. ^Z W. Malm. p. 72. ^A H. Hunt. p. 363. Higden, p. 274. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 36. Diceto, p. 466. Brompton, p. 906. ^B Hoveden, p. 336. Higden, p. 274. Sim. Dun. p. 175. Abbas Rieval. p. 565. Brompton, p. 907.

young princes, but sensible that he should render himself extremel odious, if he ordered them to be dispatched in England, sent them abroad to his ally, the king of Sweden, whom he desired, so soon as they arrived at his court, to rid him, by their death, of all farther anxiety. The Swedish monarch was too generous to comply with this request; but being afraid to draw on himself a quarrel with Canute, by protecting the English princes, he sent them to Solomon, king of Hungary, to be educated in his court^c. The elder, Edwin, was afterwards married to Solomon's sister; but he dying without issue, that prince gave his sister-in-law, Agatha, daughter of the emperor Henry II. in marriage to Edward, the younger brother; and she bore him Edgar Atheling, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Christina, who retired into a convent.

CANUTE, tho' he had reached his great point of ambition, in obtaining possession of the English crown, was obliged at first to make great sacrifices to it; and to gratify the chief of the nobility, by bestowing on them the most extensive governments and jurisdictions. He created Thurkill earl or duke of East-Anglia, (for these titles were then nearly of the same import) Yric of Northumberland, and Edric of Mercia; reserving only to himself the administration of Wessex^d. But seizing afterwards a favourable opportunity, he expelled Thurkill and Yric from their governments, and banished them the kingdom^e. He put to death many of the English nobility, on whose fidelity he could not rely, and whom he hated on account of their infidelity to their native prince^f. And even the traitor, Edric, having had the assurance to reproach him with his services, was condemned to be executed, and his body to be thrown into the Thames; a suitable reward for his multiplied acts of perfidy and rebellion^g.

CANUTE also found himself obliged in the beginning of his reign, to load the people with heavy taxes, in order to reward his Danish followers; and he exacted from them at one time the sum of 72,000 pounds; besides

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11,000

^c W. Malm. p. 73. Hoveden, p. 436. Chron. Mailr. p. 255. Higdon, p. 275. Sim. Dun. p. 176. Diceto, p. 406.
^d Chron. Sax. p. 151. W. Malm. p. 73. Hoveden, p. 436. Higdon, p. 274. Brompton, p. 966. ^e Hoveden, p. 437.
^f H. Hunt. p. 363. Abbas Rival. p. 365. ^g W. Malm. p. 73. Hoveden, p. 436.

CHAP. 11,000 pounds, which he levied upon London alone^G.

III. He was probably willing, from political motives, to mulct severely that city, on account of its affectionate adhering to Edmond, and its resisting, during the late reign, the Danish power in two obstinate sieges^H. But these rigors were imputed to necessity; and Canute, like a wise prince, was determined, that the English people, now deprived of all their dangerous leaders, should be reconciled to the Danish yoke, by the justice and equality of his administration^I. He sent back to Denmark as many of his followers as he could safely spare: He restored the Saxon customs in a general assembly of the states of the kingdom^K: He made no distinction between Danes and English in the distribution of justice^L: And he took care, by a strict execution of law, to protect the lives and properties of all his people. The Danes were gradually incorporated with his new subjects; and both were glad to breathe a little from those multiplied calamities, from which the one, no less than the other, had, in their fierce contest for power, experienced such fatal consequences.

THE removal of Edmond's children into so distant a country as Hungary, was, next to their death, regarded by Canute as the greatest security of his government; and he had no farther anxiety, except with regard to Alfred and Edward, who were protected and supported by their uncle, Richard, duke of Normandy. Richard even fitted out a great armament, in order to restore the English princes to the throne of their ancestors; and though the navy was dispersed by a storm, Canute saw the danger to which he was exposed, from the animosity of so warlike a people as the Normans. In order to acquire the friendship of the duke, he paid his addresses to queen Emma, the sister of that prince; and promised that he would leave the children whom he should have by that marriage, in possession of the crown of England. Richard complied with his demand, and sent over Emma to England, where

^G Chron. Sax. p. 151. H. Hunt. p. 363. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 37. ^H W. Malm. p. 72. In one of these sieges, Canute diverted the course of the Thames, and by that means brought his ships above London-bridge.

^I Ingulf, p. 58. ^K Chron. Sax. p. 151. Chron. Mailr. p. 155. Higden, p. 275. ^L W. Malm. p. 73.

where she was soon after married to Canute^M. The English, though they disapproved of her espousing the mortal enemy of her former husband and his family, were pleased to find at court a sovereign to whom they were accustomed, and who had already formed connections with them. And thus Canute, besides securing, by his marriage, the alliance of Normandy, gradually acquired, by the same means, the confidence of his own people^N. The Norman prince did not long survive the marriage of Emma; and he left the inheritance of the duchy to his eldest son of the same name; who dying a year after him without children, was succeeded by his brother Robert, a man of valour and ability.

CANUTE, having settled his power in England beyond all danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to resist the attacks of the king of Sweden; and he carried along with him a great body of the English, under the command of earl Godwin. This nobleman had here an opportunity of performing a service, by which he both reconciled the king's mind to the English nation, and gaining to himself the friendship of his sovereign, laid the foundation of that immense fortune which he acquired to his family. He was stationed next the Swedish camp; and observing a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged suddenly to seize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into disorder, pursued his advantage, and obtained a decisive victory over them. Next morning, Canute, seeing the English camp entirely abandoned, imagined that these disaffected troops had deserted to the enemy; and he was agreeably surprised to find that they were at that time engaged in pursuit of the discomfited Swedes^O. He was so pleased with this success, and the manner of obtaining it, that he bestowed his daughter in marriage upon Godwin, and treated him ever after with the most entire confidence and regard.

In another voyage, which he made afterwards to Denmark, Canute attacked Norway, and expelled the just, but unwarlike Olaus, from his kingdom, of which he retained

K 2

1028

^M Chron. Sax. p. 151. W. Malm. p. 73. ^N W. Malmes. p. 73. Higden, p. 275. ^O W. Malm. p. 73. H. Hunt. p. 364. Higden, p. 275. Brompton, p. 908. Matth. West. p. 207.

CHAP. III. **III.** attained possession till the death of that prince^P. He had now by his conquests and valour attained the utmost height of his ambition; and having leisure from wars and intrigues, he felt the unsatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments; and equally weary of the glories and tumults of this life, he began to cast his view towards that future existence, which it is so natural for the human mind, whether satiated by prosperity or disgusted with adversity, to make the object of its attention. Unfortunately, the spirit which prevailed in that age gave a wrong direction to his devotion; and instead of making atonement to those whom he had injured by his former acts of violence, he employed himself entirely in those exercises of piety, which the monks represented as the most meritorious. He built churches, he endowed monasteries^Q, he enriched the ecclesiastics, and he bestowed revenues for the support of chantries at Assington and other places, where he appointed prayers to be said for the souls of those who had there fallen in battle against him^R. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome^S, where he sojourned a considerable time; besides obtaining from the Pope some privileges for the English school erected there, he engaged all the princes through whose dominions he was obliged to pass, to desist from those heavy impositions and tolls, which they were accustomed to exact from the English pilgrims^T. By this spirit of devotion, no less than by his equitable and politic administration, he gained, in a good measure, the affections of his subjects.

CANUTE, who was the greatest and most powerful prince of his time, sovereign of Denmark and Norway, as well as of England, could not fail to meet with adulation from his courtiers; a tribute which is liberally paid even to the meanest and weakest princes. Some of his flatterers breaking out, one day, in admiration of his grandeur, exclaimed that every thing was possible for him:

^P Chron. Sax. p. 153. H. Hunt. p. 364. Hoveden, p. 437. Chron. Mailr. p. 155. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 38. ^Q Ingulf, p. 61. ^R W. Malm. p. 73. Diceto, p. 467. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 153. H. Hunt. p. 364. Hoveden, p. 437. Ingulf, p. 59. Chron. Mailr. p. 155. ^T W. Malm. p. 74, 75. Hoveden, p. 437. Ingulf, p. 59, 60. Higden, p. 275. Sim. Dun. p. 178.

him: Upon which the monarch, it is said, ordered his chair to be set on the sea-shore, while the tide was making; and as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice of him who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to sit some time in expectation of their submission; but when the sea still advanced towards him, and began to wash him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them that every creature in the universe was feeble and impotent, and that power resided with one Being alone, in whose hands were all the elements of nature, who could say to the ocean, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther*, and who could level with his nod the most towering piles of human pride and ambition².

THE only memorable action which Canute performed after his return from Rome, was an expedition against Malcolm, king of Scotland^A. During the reign of Ethelred, there had been imposed a tax of a shilling a hyde on all the lands of England, which was commonly called *Danegelt*; because the revenue had been employed, either in buying peace with the Danes, or in making preparations against the inroads of that hostile nation. That prince had required, that the same tax should be paid by Cumberland, which was held by the Scots; but Malcolm, a warlike prince, told him, that, as he was always able to repulse the Danes by his own power, he would neither submit to buy peace of his enemies, nor pay others for resisting them. Ethelred offended at this reply, which contained a secret reproach of his own conduct, undertook an expedition against Cumberland; and though he committed ravages upon the country^B, he could never bring Malcolm to a temper more submissive or compliant. Canute, after his accession, summoned the Scottish king to acknowledge himself a vassal for Cumberland to the crown of England; but Malcolm refused compliance, on pretence that he owed this submission only to those princes, who by right of blood inherited that kingdom. Canute was not of a temper to bear this insult; and the king of Scotland soon found, that the sceptre was

1051.

² Higden, p. 276. Brompton, p. 912. Matth. West. p. 209. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 232. ^A Chron. Sax. p. 153, 154. ^B Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 33. Sim. Dun. p. 164. Flor. Wigorn. p. 610.

CHAP. was in very different hands from those of the feeble and irresolute Ethelred. Upon Canute's appearing on the frontiers with a formidable army, Malcolm agreed, that his grandson and heir, Duncan, whom he put in possession of Cumberland, should make the submissions required, and that the heirs of Scotland should always acknowledge themselves vassals to England for that province^c.

CANUTE passed four years in peace after this enterprise, and he died at Shaftsbury^d; leaving three sons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute. Sweyn whom he had by his first marriage with Alfwen, daughter of the earl of Hampshire, was crowned in Norway: Hardicanute, whom Emma had borne him, was in possession of Denmark: Harold, who was of the same marriage with Sweyn, was at that time in England.

HAROLD HAREFOOT.

1035. **T**HOUGH Canute, in his treaty with Richard, duke of Normandy, had stipulated, that his children by Emma, should succeed to the crown of England, he had either thought himself freed from that engagement by the death of Richard, or esteemed it dangerous to leave an unsettled and newly-conquered kingdom in the hands of so young a prince as Hardicanute; and he therefore appointed by his will, Harold successor to the crown^e. This prince was besides upon the spot; he was favoured by all the Danes^f; and he got immediately possession of his father's treasures, which might be equally useful, whether he found it necessary to proceed by force or intrigue, in insuring his succession^g. On the other hand, Hardicanute had the suffrages of the English, who on account of his being born among them of queen Emma, regarded him as their countryman; he was favoured by the articles of treaty with the duke of Normandy; and above all, his party was espoused by earl Godwin, the most powerful nobleman in the kingdom, especially in the pro-

^c W. Malm. p. 74. ^d Chron. Sax. p. 154. W. Malm. p. 76. ^e Hoveden, p. 437. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. Sim. Dun. p. 179. ^f Chron. Sax. p. 154. W. Malm. p. 76. H. Hunt. p. 364. Ingulf. p. 61. Higden, p. 276. ^g Hoveden, p. 438. Sim. Dun. p. 179.

province of Wessex, the chief seat of the antient English^H. Affairs were likely to come to a civil war; when by the interposition of the nobility of both parties, a compromise was made; and it was agreed, that Harold should enjoy, together with London, all the provinces north of the Thames, while the possession of the south should remain to Hardicanute: And till that prince should appear and take possession of his dominions, Emma fixed her residence at Winchester, and established her authority over her son's share of the partition^I.

MEANWHILE, Robert, duke of Normandy, died in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and being succeeded by a son, yet a minor, the two English princes, Alfred and Edward, who found no longer any countenance or protection in that country, gladly embraced the opportunity of paying a visit, with a numerous retinue, to their mother Emma, who seemed to be placed in a state of so much power and splendor at Winchester. But the face of affairs soon wore a melancholy aspect. Earl Godwin had been gained by the arts of Harold, who gave him hopes, that he would espouse his daughter; and while the treaty was yet a secret, these two tyrants laid a plan for the destruction of the English princes. Alfred was invited to London by Harold with many professions of friendship; but when he had reached Guilford, he was set upon by Godwin's vassals, about six hundred of his train was murdered in the most cruel manner, he himself was taken prisoner, his eyes were put out, and he was conducted to the monastery of Ely, where he died soon after^K. Edward and Emma, apprized of the fate, which was awaiting them, fled beyond sea, the former into Normandy, the latter into Flanders^L: While Harold, triumphing in his bloody policy, took possession without resistance, of all the dominions assigned to his brother.

THIS

^H Chron. Sax. p. 154. W. Malm. p. 76. Higden, p. 276. Math. West. p. 209. ^I Chron. Sax. p. 154. H. Hunt. p. 364. Ingulf, p. 61. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. ^K H. Hunt. p. 365. Ypod. Neustr. p. 434. Hoveden, p. 438. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. Higden, p. 277. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 39. Sim. Dun. p. 179. Abbas Rieval. p. 366, 374. Brompton, p. 935. Gul. Gem. lib. 7. cap. 11. Math. West. p. 209. Flor. Wigorn. p. 622. Alur. Beverl. p. 118. ^L Chron. Sax. p. 155. W. Malm. p. 76.

CHAP. THIS is the only memorable action, performed during a reign of four years, by this prince, who gave so bad a specimen of his character, and whose bodily accomplishments alone are known to us, by his appellation of *Hare-foot*, which he acquired from his agility in running and walking. He died the 14th of April, 1039^M; very little regretted or esteemed by his subjects; and left the succession open to his brother, Hardicanute.

HARDICANUTE.

1039.

HARDICANUTE, or Canute the Hardy, that is, the robust (for he too is chiefly known by his bodily accomplishments) though, by remaining so long in Denmark, he had been deprived of his share in the partition of the kingdom, had not abandoned his pretensions, and had determined, before Harold's death, to recover by arms, what he had lost, either by his own negligence, or by the necessity of his affairs. On pretence of paying a visit to the Queen Dowager in Flanders, he had assembled a fleet of sixty sail, and was preparing to make a descent on England^N, when intelligence of his brother's death induced him to sail immediately to London, where he was received in triumph, and acknowledged king without opposition.

THE first act of Hardicanute's government afforded the English a very bad prognostic of his future conduct. He was so enraged at Harold, for depriving him of his share of the kingdom, and for murdering his brother, Alfred, that, in an impotent desire of revenge against the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames: And when it was found by some fishermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown again into the river: But it was fished up, a second time, and then interred with great secrecy^O. Godwin, equally servile and insolent, submitted to be his instrument, in this unnatural and brutal action.

THAT

^M Chron. Sax. p. 155. ^N Hoveden, p. 438. Sim. Dun. p. 180. ^O W. Malm. p. 76. Hoveden, p. 438. Ingulf, p. 62. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. Higden, p. 276. Chron. St. Petri. de Burgo, p. 39. Sim. Dun. p. 180. Brompton, p. 933. Flor. Wigorn. p. 623.

THAT nobleman knew, that he was universally believed to have been an accomplice in Alfred's death, and that he was on that account very obnoxious to Hardicanute; and perhaps he hoped, by displaying his rage against Harold's memory, to justify himself from having had any participation in his counsels. But prince Edward, being invited over by the king his half-brother^p, immediately on his approach, entered an accusation against Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and demanded justice for that act of barbarity. Godwin, in order to appease the king, made him a magnificent present of a galley with a gilt stern, rowed by fourscore men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing sixteen ounces, and was armed and clothed in the most sumptuous manner. Hardicanute, pleased with the splendor of this spectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and on Godwin's swearing that he was innocent of that crime, he allowed him to be acquitted^q.

THOUGH Hardicanute, before his accession, had been called over by the vows of the English, he soon lost the affections of the nation by his misconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them than his renewing the imposition of Danegelt, and obliging the nation to pay a great sum of money to the fleet, which brought him over from Denmark. The discontents went high in many places; and in Worcester the populace rose, and put to death two of the collectors^r. The king, enraged at this opposition, swore vengeance against the city, and ordered three noblemen, Godwin, duke of Wessex, Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, to execute his menaces with the utmost rigor. They were obliged to set fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their soldiers; but they saved the lives of the inhabitants; whom they confined in a small island of the Severn, called Beverey, till, by their intercession, they were able to appease the king, and obtain the pardon of the supplicants^s.

THIS violent government was of very short duration. Hardicanute died in two years after his accession, at the mar-

^p Chron. Sax. p. 156. W. Malm p. 76. H. Hunt p. 365. ^q W. Malm p. 77. Hoveden, p. 439. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 39. Sim. Dun. p. 180. ^r W. Malm. p. 76. ^s Hoveden, p. 439. Higden, p. 276. Sim. Dun. p. 181.

CHAP. marriage of a Danish lord, which he had honoured with his presence^T. His usual habits of intemperance and gluttony were so well known, that, notwithstanding his robust constitution, his sudden death gave as little surprize, as it did sorrow, to his subjects.

EDWARD the CONFESSOR.

1041.

THE English, on the death of Hardicanute, saw a favourable opportunity offered for recovering their liberty, and for shaking off the Danish yoke, under which they had so long laboured. Sweyn, king of Norway, the eldest son of Canute, was absent; and as the two last kings had died without issue, there appeared none of that race, whom the Danes could support as successor to the throne. Prince Edward was fortunately at court on his brother's demise; and though the descendants of Edmond Ironside were the true heirs of the Saxon family, yet their absence in so remote a country as Hungary, appeared a sufficient reason for their exclusion, to a people like the English, so little accustomed to observe a regular order in the succession of their monarchs. All delays might be dangerous; and the present occasion must hastily be embraced; while the Danes, without concert, without a leader, astonished at the present incident, and anxious only for their personal safety, dared not to oppose the united voice of the nation.

BUT this concurrence of circumstances in Edward's favour might have failed of its effect, had his succession been opposed by Godwin, whose power, alliances, and abilities, gave him a great influence at all times, much more amidst those sudden opportunities, which always attend a revolution of government, and which, either seized or neglected, commonly prove so decisive. There were circumstances, which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to their expectations of Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Wessex, which was almost entirely inhabited by English; and it was therefore presumed, that he would second the wishes of his people, in restoring the Saxon line, and in humbling the Danes, from whom he, as well as they, had reason to dread, as they had already felt, the most grievous oppressions. On the other hand, there subsisted a

^T Hoveden, p. 439. Sim. Dun. p. 181. Flor. Wigorn. p. 623.

declared animosity between Edward and Godwin, on account of Alfred's murder; of which the latter had publicly been accused by the prince, and which he might believe so deep an offence, as could never, on account of any subsequent merits, be sincerely pardoned. But their common friends here interposed; and representing the necessity of their good correspondence, obliged them to lay aside all jealousy and rancour, and concur in restoring liberty to their native country. Godwin only stipulated, that Edward, as a pledge of his sincere reconciliation, should promise to marry his daughter, Editha^U; and having fortified himself by this alliance, he summoned at Gillingham a general council of the nation, and prepared every measure for securing the succession to Edward. The English were unanimous and zealous in their resolutions; the Danes were divided and dispirited: Any small opposition, which appeared in this assembly, was browbeaten and suppressed; and Edward was crowned king, with the highest demonstrations of duty and affection^X.


THE triumph of the English, upon this signal and decisive advantage, was at first attended with some insult and violence against the Danes; but the king, by the mildness of his character, soon reconciled the latter to his administration, and the distinction between the two nations gradually disappeared. They were interspersed with the English in most of the provinces; they spoke nearly the same tongue; they differed little in their manners and laws; the prevalence of domestic dissensions in Denmark, prevented, for a long time, any powerful invasion from thence^Y, which might awaken their animosities; and as the Norman conquest, which ensued soon after, reduced both nations to equal subjection, there is no farther mention in history of any difference between them. The joy, however, of their present deliverance made such impression on the minds of the English, that they instituted an annual festival for celebrating that great event; and it was observed in some countries, even to the age of Spellman^Z.

THE

^U W. Malm. p. 80. H. Hunt. p. 365. Ingulf, p. 62.

^X W. Malm. p. 80. ^Y In the year 1046, the Danes made an invasion from twenty-five ships, the only one we read of during this reign. Chron. Sax. p. 158. King Edward remitted the tax called Danegelt. Brompton, p. 942. Chron. Dunstable, vol. i. p. 18.

^Z Spel. Glossary in verbo *Hæcday*.

CHAP. **HL**  THE popularity, which Edward enjoyed on his accession, was not destroyed by the first act of his administration, the resuming all the grants of his immediate predecessors; an attempt, which is commonly attended with the most dangerous consequences. The poverty of the crown convinced the nation, that this act of violence was become absolutely necessary; and as the loss fell chiefly on the Danes, who had obtained large grants from the late kings, their countrymen, on account of their services in subduing the kingdom, the English were rather pleased to see them reduced to their primitive poverty. The king's severity also towards his mother the Queen-dowager, though exposed to some more censure, met not with very general disapprobation. He had hitherto lived on very indifferent terms with that princess: He accused her of neglecting him and his brother during their adverse fortune ^A: He remarked, that as the superior qualities of Canute, and his better treatment of her ^B, had made her entirely indifferent to the memory of Ethelred, she also gave the preference to her children of the second bed, and always regarded Hardicanute as her favourite. The same reasons had probably made her unpopular in England; and though her benefactions to the monks obtained her the favour of that order, the nation was not, in general, displeased to see her stripped by Edward of immense treasures which she had amassed ^C. He confined her, during the remainder of her life, in a monastery at Winchester; but carried no farther his rigour against her. The stories of his accusing her of a participation in her son, Alfred's murder, and of a criminal correspondence with the bishop of Winchester, and also of her justifying herself by treading unhurt with her bare feet over nine burning plow-shares, were the inventions of the monkish historians, and were propagated and believed from the silly wonder of posterity ^D.

THE English flattered themselves, that, by the accession of Edward, they were delivered for ever from the dominion of foreigners; but they soon found, that evil was not yet entirely removed. The king had been educated

^A Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 237. ^B W. Malm. p. 64, 80. Brompton, p. 906. ^C Chron. Sax. p. 157. W. Malm. p. 80. Hoveden, p. 439. Higden, p. 277. ^D Higden, p. 277.

cated in Normandy; and had contracted many intimacies with the natives of that country, as well as an affection to their manners^E. The court of England was soon filled with Normans, who being distinguished both by the favour of Edward, and by a degree of cultivation somewhat superior to that of the English in those ages, soon rendered their language, customs and laws fashionable in the kingdom. The study of the French tongue became general among the people. The courtiers affected to imitate that nation in their dress, equipage, and entertainments: Even the lawyers employed a foreign language in their deeds and papers^F: But above all, the church felt the influence and dominion of these strangers: Ulf and William, two Normans, who had formerly been the king's chaplains, were created bishops of Dorchester and London. Robert was promoted to the see of Canterbury^G, and always enjoyed the highest favour of his master, of which his abilities rendered him not unworthy. And though the king's prudence or his want of authority, made him confer almost all the civil and military employments on the natives, the ecclesiastical preferments fell often to the share of the Normans; and as the latter possessed Edward's confidence, they had secretly a great influence on public affairs, and excited the jealousy of the English, particularly of earl Godwin^H.

THIS powerful nobleman, besides being duke or earl of Wessex, had, annexed to his government, the counties of Kent and Suffex. His eldest son, Sweyn, possessed the same authority in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Gloucester and Hereford: And Harold, his second son, was duke of East-Anglia, augmented by the government of Essex^I. The exorbitant authority of his family was supported by immense possessions and powerful alliances; and the abilities, as well as ambition, of Godwin himself contributed to render it still more dangerous. A prince of greater capacity and vigour than Edward would have found it difficult to support the dignity of the crown under such circumstances; and as the haughty temper of Godwin made him often forget the respect, due to his prince, Edward's animosity against him was grounded on

^E Ingulph, p. 62. ^F Ingulph, p. 62. ^G Chron. Sax. p. 161. ^H W. Malm. p. 80. ^I Moreden, p. 441. Higden, p. 279. Sim. Dun. p. 184.

CHAP. on personal as well as political considerations, on recent
III. as well as more antient injuries. The king, in pursuance
 of his engagements, had indeed married Editha, the
 daughter of Godwin^K; but this alliance became rather
 the source of enmity between them. Edward's hatred of
 the father was transferred to that princess; and Editha,
 tho' possessed of many amiable accomplishments, never
 could acquire the confidence and affection of her hus-
 band. It is even pretended, that, during the whole
 course of her life, he abstained from all commerce of
 love with her; and such was the absurd admiration, paid
 to an inviolable chastity, during those ages, that his con-
 duct in this particular is highly celebrated by the monkish
 historians, and contributed to his acquiring the title of
 saint and confessor^L.

THE most popular pretence, on which Godwin could
 ground his discontents against the king and his administra-
 tion, was to complain of the influence of the Normans in
 the government; and a declared opposition had thence
 arisen between him and these favourites. It was not long
 before this animosity broke into action. Eustace, count
 of Bologne, having paid a visit to the king, passed by
 Dover on his return; and one of his train, being refused
 access to a lodging, which had been assigned him, attempt-
 ed to make his way by force, and he wounded the master
 of the house in the contest. The townsmen revenged
 this insult by the death of the stranger; the count and his
 train took arms, and murdered the townsman in his own
 house; a tumult ensued; near twenty persons were killed
 on each side; and Eustace, being overpowered with num-
 bers, was obliged by flight to save his life from the fury
 of the populace^M. He hurried immediately to court;
 complained of the usage he had met with; the king en-
 tered zealously into the quarrel, and resented that a stran-
 ger of such distinction, whom he had invited over to his
 court, should, without any just cause, as he believed,
 have felt so sensibly the insolence and animosity of his
 people. He gave orders to Godwin, in whose govern-
 ment

^K Chron. Sax. p. 157. ^L W. Malm. p. 80. Higden,
 p. 277. Abbas Rieval. p. 366, 377. Math. West. p. 221.
 Chron. Thom. Wykes, p. 21. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 241.
^M Chron. Sax. p. 162. W. Malm. p. 81. Hoveden, p. 441.
 Higden, i. 279. Sim. Dun. p. 184.

ment Dover lay, to go immediately to the place, and to punish the inhabitants for the crime: But Godwin, who desired rather to encourage, than repress, the popular discontents against foreigners, refused obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame on the count of Bologne, and his retinue^N. Edward, touched in so sensible a point, saw the necessity of exerting the royal authority: and he threatened Godwin, if he persisted in his disobedience, to make him feel the utmost effects of his resentment.

THE earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleased to embark in a cause, where it was likely he would be supported by his countrymen, prepared for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward; and under pretence of repressing some disorders on the Welsh frontier, he secretly assembled a great army, and was approaching the king, who resided, without any military force, and without suspicion, at Gloucester^O. Edward then applied for protection to Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, two powerful noblemen, whose jealousy of Godwin's greatness, as well as their duty to the crown, engaged them to defend the king in this extremity. They hastened to him with such of their followers as they could assemble on the sudden; and finding the danger still greater than they had apprehended, they issued orders for mustering all the forces within their government, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's person and authority^P. Edward, meanwhile, endeavoured to protract time by negotiation; while Godwin, who thought the king entirely in his power, and who was willing to save appearances, fell into the snare; and not sensible, that he ought to have no farther reserve after he had proceeded so far, he lost the favourable opportunity of rendering himself master of the government.

THE English, though they had not a very high idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him great affection on account of his humanity, justice, and piety, as well as of the long race of their native kings, from whom he was descended; and they hastened from all quarters to defend

^N Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81. Higden, p. 279.
^O Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81, ^P Hoveden, p. 441. Sim. Dun. p. 184.

CHAP.

III.

defend him from the present danger. His army was now so considerable, that he ventured to take the field; and marching to London, he summoned a great council of the kingdom, to judge of the rebellion of Godwin and his sons. These noblemen pretended at first that they were willing to stand their trial; but having in vain endeavoured to make their adherents persist in rebellion^Q, they offered to come to London, provided they might receive hostages for their safety^R; and this proposal being rejected, they were obliged to disband the remains of their forces, and to have recourse to flight^S. Baldwin, earl of Flanders, gave protection to Godwin and his three sons Gurth, Sweyn, and Tosti: the latter of whom had married the daughter of that prince: Harold and Leofwin, two others of his sons, took shelter in Ireland^T. The estates of the father and sons were confiscated: Their governments were given to others: Queen Editha was confined to a monastery at Warewel: And the greatness of this family, once so formidable, seemed now to be totally supplanted and overthrown^V.

BUT Godwin had fixed his authority on too firm a basis, and he was too strongly supported by alliances both abroad and at home, not to occasion farther disturbances, and make new efforts for his re-establishment. The earl of Flanders allowed him to purchase and hire ships within his harbours; and Godwin, having manned them with his followers, and with free-booters of all nations, put to sea, and attempted to make a descent at Sandwich. The king, informed of his preparations, had equipped a considerable fleet, much superior to that of the enemy; and the earl hastily, before their appearance, made his retreat into the Flemish harbours^X. The English court, allured by the present security, and devoid of all vigorous counsels, allowed the seamen to disband, and the fleet to go to decay^Y; while Godwin, expecting this event, kept his men in a readiness for action. He put to sea immediately, and sailed to the Isle of Wight, where he was

^Q Hoveden, p. 441. Sim. Dun. p. 185. ^R Higden, p. 279. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 164. W. Malm. p. 81, 82.
^T Hoveden, p. 441. Higden, p. 279. Alur. Beverl. p. 120.
^V Chron. Sax. p. 165. W. Malm. p. 82. Hoveden, p. 441.
^X Chron. Mailr. p. 157. ^Y Sim. Dun. p. 186. ^Z Chron. Sax. p. 166.

was joined by Harold with a squadron, which that noble man had collected in Ireland. He was now master of the sea; and entering every harbour in the southern coast, he seized all the ships^z, and summoned his followers in those counties, which had so long been subjected to his government, to assist him in procuring justice to himself, his family, and his country, against the tyranny of foreigners^a. Reinforced by great numbers from all quarters, he entered the Thames; and appearing at London, threw every thing into confusion. The king alone seemed resolute to defend himself to the last extremity; but the interposition of the English nobility, many of whom favoured Godwin's pretensions, made Edward hearken to terms of accommodation; and the feigned humility of the earl, who disclaimed all intentions of offering violence to his sovereign, and desired only to justify himself by a fair open trial, paved the way for his more easy admission^b. It was stipulated that he should give hostages for his good behaviour, and that the prioste and all the foreigners should be banished^c. And by this treaty, the present danger of a civil war was obviated, but the authority of the crown was considerably impaired, or rather entirely annihilated. Edward, sensible that he had not power sufficient to secure Godwin's hostages in England, sent them over to his kinsman, the young duke of Normandy^d.

GODWIN's death, which happened soon after, while he was sitting at table with the king^e, prevented him from establishing fully the exorbitant authority which he had acquired, and from reducing Edward to still greater subjection^f. He was succeeded in the government of

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Waller,

^z Chron. Sax. p. 166.^a Heyden, p. 442. Sim. Dun.

p. 186. Flor. Wigorn. p. 628.

^b Chron. Sax. p. 167.

W. Malm. p. 82.

^c Chron. Sax. p. 167, 168. W. Malm.

p. 82. Chron. Mailr. p. 157.

Heyden, p. 279.

^d W.

Malm. p. 82. Heyden, p. 449.

^e W. Malmes. p. 81.

H. Hunt. p. 366.

^f The ingenious author of the article GODWIN, in the Biographia Britannica, has endeavoured to clear the memory of that nobleman, upon the supposition, that all the English annals had been falsified by the Norman historians after the conquest. But that this supposition has not much foundation, appears hence, that almost all these historians have given a very good character of his son Harold, whom it was much more the interest of the Norman cause to blacken.

CHAP. Wessex, Suffex, Kent, and Essex, and in the office of
 III. steward of the household, a place of great power, by his son, Harold, who was actuated by an ambition equal to that of his father; and was superior to him in address, in insinuation, and in-virtue. By a modest and gentle demeanor, he acquired the good-will of Edward; at least, softened that hatred which the prince had so long borne his family^G; and gaining every day new partizans by his bounty and affability, he proceeded, in a more silent, and therefore a more dangerous manner, to the increase of his authority. The king, who had not sufficient vigour directly to oppose his progress, knew of no other expedient than that hazardous one, of raising him a rival in the family of Leofric, duke of Mercia, whose son, Algar, was invested in the government of East-Anglia, which, before the banishment of Harold, had belonged to this latter nobleman. But this policy, of balancing opposite parties, required a more steady hand to manage it than that of Edward, and naturally produced faction, and even civil broils, among nobles of such mighty and independent authority. Algar was soon after expelled his government by the intrigues and power of Harold^H; but being protected by Griffith, prince of Wales, who had married his daughter, as well as by the power of his father, Leofric, he obliged Harold to submit to an accommodation, and was reinstated in the government of East-Anglia. This peace was not of long continuance: Harold, taking advantage of Leofric's death, which happened soon after, expelled Algar anew, and banished him the kingdom^I: And though that nobleman made a fresh irruption into East-Anglia with an army of Norwegians, and overrun the country^K, his death soon freed Harold from the pretensions of so dangerous a rival. Edward, his eldest son, was indeed advanced to the government of Mercia; but the balance, which the king desired to establish between those powerful families, was wholly lost, and the influence of Harold entirely preponderated.

1055. The death of Siward, duke of Northumberland, made the way still more open to the ambition of that nobleman.

^G Brompton, p. 948. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 169. H. Hunt. p. 366. Hoveden, p. 443. Ingulf, p. 66. Chron. Majr. p. 158. Higden, p. 281. ^I Hoveden, p. 444. ^K Ingulf, p. 66. Chron. St. Pierre de Burgo. p. 44.

man. Siward, besides his other merits, had acquired CHAP. III. honour to England, by his successful conduct of the only foreign enterprize which was undertaken during the reign of Edward. Duncan, king of Scotland, was a prince of a very gentle disposition, but possessed not vigour sufficient to govern a country so turbulent, and so much infected by the intrigues and animosities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not contented with curbing the king's authority, carried farther his pestilent ambition: He put his sovereign to death; chased Malcolm Kenmure, his son and heir, into England; and usurped the crown. Siward, whose daughter was married to Duncan, embraced, by Edward's orders, the protection of this distressed family: He marched an army into Scotland; and having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he restored Malcolm to the throne of his ancestors^L. This service, added to his former connexions with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great accession to the authority of Siward in the north; but as he had lost his eldest son Osbern, in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the issue fatal to his family. His second son, Walthoef, appeared; on his father's death, too young to be entrusted with the government of Northumberland; and Harold's influence obtained that dukedom for his brother, Tofti^M.

THERE are two circumstances related of Siward, which discover his high sense of honour and his martial disposition. When intelligence was brought him of his son Osbern's death, he was inconsolable; till he heard, that the wound was received in the breast, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action^N. When he found his own death approaching, he ordered his servants to clothe him in a compleat suit of armour; and sitting erect on the couch, with a spear in his hand, declared, that, in that posture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment^O.

THE king, now worn out with cares and infirmities, felt himself far advanced in the decline of life; and having

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^L W. Malm. p. 79. Hoveden, p. 443. Chron. Mailr. p. 158. Buchanan, p. 115. edit. 1715. ^M H. Hunt. p. 366.

^N H. Hunt. p. 366. Higden, p. 280. Brompton, p. 946.

^O Higden, p. 281. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 43. Diceto, p. 477.

CHAP. III. **III.** lag no issue himself, began to think of fixing a successor to the kingdom. He sent a deputation into Hungary, to invite over his nephew, Edward, son to his elder brother, and the only remaining heir of the Saxon line^o. That prince, whose succession to the crown would have been easy and undisputed, came over to England with his children, Edgar, surnamed Atheling, Margaret, and Christina; but his death, which happened a few days after his arrival, threw the king into new difficulties. He saw, that the great power and ambition of Harold had tempted him to think of obtaining possession of the throne on the first vacancy; and that Edgar, on account of his youth and inexperience, was very unfit to oppose the pretensions of so popular and enterprising a rival. The animosity which he had long borne earl Godwin, made him averse to the succession of his son; and he could not, without extreme reluctance, think of an increase of grandeur to a family, which had risen on the ruins of royal authority, and which, by the murder of Alfred, his brother, had contributed so much to the weakening of the Saxon line. In this uncertainty, he secretly cast his eye towards his kinsman, William duke of Normandy, as the only person whose power, and character, and capacity, could support any destination which he might make to the exclusion of Harold, and his family^p.

THIS famous prince was natural son of Robert, duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaise^q, and was very early established in that grandeur, from which his birth seemed to have set him at so great a distance. While he was but nine years of age, his father had resolved to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; a fashionable act of devotion, which had taken place of the pilgrimages to Rome, and which, as it was attended with more difficulty and danger, and carried those religious adventurers to the first sources of Christianity, appeared to them much more pious and meritorious. Before his departure, he assembled the states of the duchy; and informing them of his purpose, he engaged them to swear allegiance to his natural son, William, whom, as he had no legitimate issue, he intended, in case he should

^o H. Hunt. p. 366. Hoveden, p. 444. Ingulf, p. 66.
^q Chron. Majr. p. 158. ^p Ingulf, p. 66. ^r H. Hunt. p. 366.

die in the pilgrimage, to leave successor to his dominions^R. As he was a prudent prince, he could not but foresee the great inconveniences which must attend this journey, and this settlement of his succession; arising from the natural turbulency of the great, the claims from other branches of the ducal family, and the power of the French monarch: But all these views were superseded by the prevailing zeal for pilgrimages^S; and probably, the more important they were, the more would Robert exult in sacrificing them to what he imagined to be his religious duty.

THIS prince, as he had apprehended, died in his pilgrimage; and the minority of his son was attended with all those inconveniences, which were unavoidable in his situation. The licentious nobles, freed from the awe of sovereign authority, broke out into personal animosities against each other, and made the whole country a scene of war and devastation^T. Roger, count of Tōni, and Alain, count of Brittany, advanced pretensions to the dominion of the state; and Henry I. king of France, thought the opportunity favourable for reducing the power of a vassal, who had at first acquired his settlement in such a violent and invidious manner, and who had long appeared formidable to his sovereign^U. The regency established by Robert experienced great difficulties in supporting the government under this complication of dangers; and the young prince, when he came to age, found himself reduced to a very low condition. But the great qualities, which he soon displayed in the field and in the cabinet, gave encouragement to his friends, and struck a terror into his enemies. He opposed himself on all sides against his rebellious subjects, and against foreign invaders; and by his valour and conduct prevailed in every action. He obliged the French king to grant him peace on reasonable terms; he expelled all pretenders to the sovereignty; and he reduced his turbulent barons to pay submission to his authority, and to suspend their mutual animosities. The natural severity of his temper appeared in a rigorous administration of justice; and having found the happy effects of this plan of government, without which

^R W. Malm. p. 95. ^S Ypod. Neust. p. 452. ^T W. Malm. p. 95. Gal. Gemet. lib. 7: cap. 1. ^U W. Malm. p. 97.

CHAP. which the laws in those ages became totally impotent, he regarded it as a fixed maxim, that an inflexible conduct was the first duty of a sovereign.

III.

THE tranquillity which he had established in his dominions had given William leisure to pay a visit to the king of England during the time of Godwin's banishment; and he was received in a manner suitable to the great reputation which he had acquired, to the relation by which he was connected with Edward, and to the obligations which that prince owed to his family^x. On the return of Godwin, and the expulsion of the Norman favourites, Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, had, before his departure, persuaded Edward to think of adopting William as his successor; a council, which was favoured by the king's aversion to Godwin, his prepossession towards the Normans, and his esteem of the duke. That prelate, therefore, received a commission to inform William of the king's intentions in his favour; and he was the first person who opened the mind of the prince to entertain these ambitious hopes^y. But Edward, irresolute and feeble in his purpose, finding that the English would more easily acquiesce in the restoration of the Saxon line, had, in the mean time, invited his brother's descendants from Hungary, with a view of having them recognized heirs to the throne^z. The death of his nephew, and the inexperience and unpromising qualities of young Edgar, made him resume his former intentions in favour of the duke of Normandy; though his aversion to hazardous enterprizes engaged him to postpone the execution, and even to keep his purpose secret from all his ministers.

HAROLD, mean while, proceeded, after a more open manner, in increasing his popularity, in establishing his power, and in preparing the way for his advancement on the first vacancy of the throne; an event which, from the age and infirmities of the king, appeared not very distant. But there was still an obstacle, which it was requisite for him previously to overcome. Earl Godwin, when restored to his power and fortune, had given hostages for his good behaviour; and among the rest one son and one grand-

^x Hoveden, p. 442. Ingulf, p. 65. Chron. Mail. p. 157. Higden, p. 279. ^y Ingulf, p. 68. Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 31. Order. Vitalis, p. 492. ^z W. Malm. p. 93. H. Hunt. p. 366.

grandson, whom Edward, for greater security, had sent over to be kept in Normandy. Harold, though not aware of the duke's being his competitor, was uneasy, that such near relation should be detained prisoners in a foreign country; and he was afraid, lest William should, in favour of Edgar, retain these pledges as a check on the ambition of any other pretender^A. He represented, therefore, to the king, his unfeigned submission to royal authority, his steady duty to his prince, and the little necessity there was, after such a uniform trial of his obedience, to detain any longer those hostages, who had been required on the first composing of civil discords. By these topics, enforced by his great power, he extorted the king's consent to release them; and to effectuate his purpose, he immediately proceeded, with a numerous retinue, on his journey to Normandy^B. A tempest drove him on the territory of Guy, count of Ponthieu, who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him prisoner^C, and demanded an exorbitant sum for his ransom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his situation to the duke of Normandy; and represented, that, while he was proceeding to *his* court, in execution of a commission from the king of England, he had met with this harsh treatment from the mercenary disposition of the count of Ponthieu.

WILLIAM was immediately sensible of the importance of the incident. He foresaw, that, if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no farther obstacle in executing the favourable intentions which he had entertained in his behalf. He sent, therefore, an ambassador to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his prisoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuse so great a prince, put Harold into the hands of the Norman ambassador, who conducted him to Rouen^D. William received him with every demonstration of respect and friendship; and after shewing himself disposed to comply with his desire, in delivering up the hostages, he took an opportunity of disclosing to him

^A Brompton, p. 947. ^B Hoveden, p. 449. Brompton, p. 947. Eadmer, lib. 1: p. 4. Alured Beverl. p. 125. ^C Hoveden, p. 449. ^D W. Malm. p. 93. Hoveden, p. 449. Brompton, p. 947. Gul. Gemet. lib. 7, cap. 31.

CHAP. III. him the great secret of his pretensions to the crown of England, and of the will which Edward intended to make in his favour. He desired the assistance of Harold in perfecting that design; he made professions of the utmost gratitude in return for so great an obligation; he promised that the present grandeur of Harold's family, which supported itself with difficulty under the jealousy and hatred of Edward, should receive new increase from a successor, who would be so sensibly beholden to him for his advancement. Harold was surprized with this declaration of the duke; but being sensible that he could never recover his own liberty, much less that of his brother and nephew, if he refused the demand, he feigned a compliance with William, renounced all hopes of the crown for himself, and professed his sincere intention of supporting the will of Edward, and seconding the pretensions of the duke of Normandy. William, to tie him faster to his interests, besides offering him his daughter in marriage^F, required him to take an oath, that he would fulfil his promises; and in order to render that oath more binding, he employed an artifice, well suited to the ignorance and superstition of the age. He secretly conveyed under the altar, on which Harold agreed to swear, the reliques of some of the most respected martyrs; and when Harold had taken the oath, he shewed him the reliques, and admonished him to observe religiously an engagement, which had been ratified by so tremendous a sanction^F. The English nobleman was astonished; but dissembling his concern, he renewed the same professions, and was dismissed with all the marks of mutual confidence by the duke of Normandy.

WHEN Harold found himself at liberty, his ambition suggested calafity sufficient to justify to him the violation of an oath, which had been extorted from him by fear, and which, if fulfilled, might be attended with the subjection of his native country to a foreign power. He continued still to practise every art of popularity; to increase the number of his partizans; to reconcile the minds of the English to the idea of his succession; to re-

vive

^F W. Malm. p. 93. H. Hunt p. 366. Hoveden, p. 449. Ingulf. p. 68. Wace, p. 459, 460. MS. ponds Carte, p. 254. W. Malm. p. 93. H. Hunt p. 366. Hoveden, p. 449. Brompton, p. 947.

vive their hatred to the Normans; and by an ostentation of his power and influence, to deter the timorous Edward from executing his intended destination in favour of William. Fortune, about this time, threw two incidents in his way, by which he was enabled to acquire general favour, and to increase the character, which he had already attained, of virtue and capacity.

THE Welsh, though a less formidable enemy than the Danes had been long accustomed to infest the western borders; and after committing spoil on the low countries, they usually made a hasty retreat into their mountains, where they were sheltered from the pursuit of their enemies, and were ready to seize the first favourable opportunity of renewing their depredations. Griffith, their present prince, had much distinguished himself in these incursions; and his name had become so terrible to the English, that Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable to himself, than the suppressing so dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition against Wales; and having prepared some light-armed foot to pursue the natives into their fastnesses, some cavalry to scour the open country, and a Squadron of ships to attack the sea-coast, he employed at once all these forces against the Welsh, prosecuted his advantages with vigour, made no intermission in his assaults, and at last reduced the enemy to such distress, that, in order to prevent their total destruction, they made a sacrifice of their prince, whose head they cut off, and sent to Harold; and they were contented to receive as their sovereigns two Welsh noblemen appointed by Edward to rule over them^G. The other incident was no less honourable to Harold.

TOSTI, brother of this nobleman, had been created duke of Northumberland; but being of a violent, tyrannical temper, had practised such cruelty and injustice upon the inhabitants, that they rose in rebellion against him, and chased him from his government. Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who possessed great power in those quarters, and who were grandsons of the great duke, Leofric, concurred

^G Chron. Sax. p. 170. W. Malm. p. 79. H. Hunt. p. 367. Hoveden, p. 446. Ingulf, p. 68. Chron. Mair. p. 159. Higden, p. 283. Sim. Dun. p. 192.

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III.

concurring in the insurrection; and the former, being elected duke, advanced with an army, to oppose Harold, who was commissioned by the king to reduce and punish the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action, Morcar, well acquainted with the generous disposition of the English commander, endeavoured to justify his conduct; and represented to him, that Tosti had behaved in a manner unworthy of the station to which he was advanced, and no one, not even a brother, could support such tyranny, without participating, in some degree, of the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accustomed to a legal administration, and regarding it as their birthright, were willing to submit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their ancestors, that death was preferable to servitude, and had come to the field determined to perish, rather than suffer a renewal of those indignities, to which they had been so long exposed; and they trusted, that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another that violent conduct, from which he himself in his own government, had always kept at so great a distance^H. This vigorous remonstrance was accompanied with such a detail of facts, so well supported, that Harold found it prudent to abandon his brother's cause; and returning to Edward, he persuaded him to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government^I. He even married the sister of that nobleman^K; and by his interest procured Edwin, the younger brother, to be elected into the government of Mercia. Tosti in a rage departed the kingdom, and took shelter in Flanders with earl Baldwin, his father-in-law^L.

By this marriage, Harold broke all measures with the duke of Normandy; and William clearly perceived, that he could no longer rely on the oaths and promises, which he had extorted from him. But the English nobleman now thought himself in such a situation, that it was no longer necessary for him to dissemble. He had, in his conduct

^H Higden, p. 283. ^I Chron. Sax. p. 171. W. Malin. p. 83. H. Hunt. p. 367. Higden, p. 283. Sim. Dun. p. 193. ^K Order. Vitalis, p. 492. ^L H. Hunt. p. 367. Higden, p. 283. Sim. Dun. p. 193. Abbr. Bevel. p. 122.

conduct against the Northumbrians, given such a specimen of his moderation as had gained him the affections of his countrymen. He saw, that almost all England was under the command of himself or his friends; while he possessed the government of Wexsex, Morcar, that of Northumberland, and Edwin that of Mercia. He now openly aspired to the succession; and insisted, that, since it was necessary, by the confession of all, to set aside the royal family, on account of the imbecility of Edgar, the sole surviving heir, there was no one so capable of filling the throne, as a nobleman, of great power, of mature age, of long experience, of approved courage and ability, who being a native of the kingdom, would effectually secure it against the dominion and tyranny of foreigners. Edward broken with age and infirmities, saw the difficulties too great for him to encounter; and though his inveterate prepossessions kept him from seconding the pretensions of Harold, he took but feeble and irresolute steps for securing the succession to the duke of Normandy^M. While he continued in this uncertainty, he

was

^M The whole story of the transactions between Edward, Harold, and the duke of Normandy is told so differently by the ancient writers, that there are few important passages of the English history liable to so great uncertainty. I have followed the account, which appeared to me the most consistent and probable. It does not seem likely, that Edward ever executed a will in the duke's favour, much less that he got it ratified by the states of the kingdom, as is affirmed by some. The will would have been unknown to all, and would have been produced by the Conqueror, to whom it gave so plausible, and really so just a title; but the doubtful and ambiguous manner in which he seems always to have mentioned it, proves, that he could only plead the known intentions of that monarch in his favour, which he was desirous to call a will. There is indeed a charter of the Conqueror preserved by Dr. Hickes, vol. 1. where he calls himself *rex hereditarius*, meaning heir by will; but a prince, possessed of so much power, and attended with so much success, may employ what pretences he pleases: It is sufficient to refute his pretences to observe, that there is a great diffidence and variation among the historians with regard to a point, which, had it been real, must have been agreed upon by all of them.

Again, some historians, particularly Malmbury and Matthew Westminster, affirm that Harold had no intention of going over

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CHAP. was surprized by sickness, which brought him to his grave, on the fifth of January 1066, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign.

III.

THIS prince, to whom the monks gave the title of saint and confessor, was the last of the Saxon line, who ruled in England; and though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed this prosperity less to his own ability than to the conjunctures of the times. The Danes, employed in other enterprizes, attempted not those incursions, which had been so troublesome to all his predecessors, and fatal to some of them. The facility of his disposition made him acquiesce under the government of Godwin, and his son Harold; and the capacity, as well as the power of these noblemen, enabled them, while they were entrusted with authority, to preserve domestic peace and tranquillity. The most commendable circumstance of Edward's government was his attention to the administration of justice, and his compiling for that purpose a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, though now lost (for the laws that pass under Edward's name were composed afterwards ^A) were long the objects of affection to the English nation.

EDWARD the Confessor was the first who touched for the king's evil: The opinion of his sanctity procured belief to this cure among the people; and his successors regarded

to Normandy, but that taking the air in a pleasure boat on the coast, he was driven over by stress of weather to the territories of Guy count of Ponthieu: But besides that this story is not probable in itself, and is contradicted by most of the antient historians, it is refuted by a very curious and authentic monument lately discovered. It is a tapestry, preserved in the ducal palace of Rouen, and supposed to have been wrought by orders of Matilda, wife to the emperor: At least it is of very great antiquity. Harold is there represented as taking his departure from king Edward in execution of some commission, and mounting his vessel with a great train. The design of redeeming his brother and nephew, who were hostages, is the most likely cause that can be assigned; and is accordingly mentioned by Eadmer, Hoveden, Brompton, and Simeon of Durham. For a farther account of this piece of tapestry, see *Histoire de l'Academie de Literature*, tom. ix. page 535.

^A Spelm. in verbo *Balliva*.

regarded it as a part of their power and grandeur to uphold the same opinion. It has been continued down to our time; and the practice was first dropped by the present royal family, who observed, that it could no longer give amazement even to the populace, and was attended with ridicule in the eyes of all men of understanding.

H A R O L D.

HAROLD had so well prepared matters before the death of the king, that he immediately stepped into the vacant throne; and his accession was attended with as little opposition and disturbance, as if he had succeeded by the most undoubted hereditary title. The citizens of London were his zealous partizans: The bishops and clergy had adopted his cause: And all the most powerful nobility, connected with him by alliance or friendship, willingly seconded his pretensions. The title of Edgar Atheling was scarce ever mentioned: Much less, the claim of the duke of Normandy: And Harold, assembling the council, received the crown from their hands, without waiting for any regular meeting of the states, or submitting the question to their free choice or determination^B. If there were any malcontents at this resolution, they were obliged to conceal their sentiments; and the new prince taking a general silence for consent, and founding his title on the supposed suffrages of the people, which appeared unanimous, was, on the day immediately succeeding Edward's death, crowned and anointed king, by Aldred archbishop of York. The whole nation seemed joyfully to swear allegiance to him.

1066.
January.

THE first symptoms of danger, which the king discovered, came from abroad, and from his own brother, Tosti, who had submitted to a voluntary banishment in Flanders. Enraged at the successful ambition of Harold,

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^B G. Pict. p. 196. Ypod. Neust. p. 436. Order. Vitalis, p. 492. M. West. p. 221. W. Malm. p. 93. Ingulf, p. 168. Drompton, p. 957. Knyghton, p. 2339. H. Hunt. p. 210. Many of the historians say, that Harold was regularly elected by the states: Some, that Edward left him his successor by will.

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to which he himself had fallen a sacrifice, he filled the court of Baldwin with complaints of the injustice, which he had suffered: He engaged the interest of that family against his brother: He endeavoured to form intrigues with some malcontent nobility of England: He sent his emissaries to Norway, in order to rouse to arms the freebooters of that kingdom, and excite their hopes of reaping advantage from the unsettled state of affairs on the usurpation of the new king: And that he might render the combination more formidable, he made a journey to Normandy; in expectation that the duke, who had married Matilda, another daughter of Baldwin, would, in revenge of his own injuries, as well as those of Tosti, second, by his councils and forces, the projected invasion of England^c.

THE duke of Normandy, when he first received intelligence of Harold's intrigues and accession, had been moved to the highest pitch of indignation; but that he might give the better colour to his pretensions, he sent over an embassy to England, upbraiding that prince with his breach of faith and summoning him to resign immediately possession of the kingdom. Harold replied to the Norman ambassadors, that the oath with which he was reproached, had been extorted by the well grounded fear of violence, and could never, for that reason, be regarded as obligatory: That he had had no commission, either from the late king or the states of England, who alone could dispose of the crown to make any tender of the succession to the duke of Normandy; and if he, a private person, had assumed so much authority, and had even voluntarily sworn to support the duke's pretensions, the oath was unlawful, and it was his duty to seize the first opportunity of breaking it: That he had obtained the crown by the unanimous suffrages of the people; and should shew himself totally unworthy of their favour, did he not strenuously maintain those national liberties, with which they had entrusted him: And that the duke, if he made any attempt by force of arms, should experience the power of an united nation, conducted by a prince, who, sensible of the obligations, imposed on him by his royal

^c Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

royal dignity, was determined, that the same moment should put a period to his life and to his government^D. CHAP.
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THIS answer was no other than William expected; and he had previously fixed his resolution of making an attempt upon England. Consulting only his courage, his resentment, and his ambition, he overlooked all the difficulties, which must attend an attack of a great kingdom by such inferior force, and he saw only the circumstances, which would facilitate his enterprize. He considered, that England, ever since the accession of Canute, had enjoyed a most profound tranquillity, during a period of near fifty years; and it would require time for its soldiers, enervated by long peace, to learn discipline, and its generals experience. He knew, that it was entirely unprovided of fortified towns, by which it could prolong the war; but must venture its whole fortune in one decisive action against a veteran enemy, who, being once master of the field, would be in a condition to over-run the kingdom. He saw that Harold, though he had given proofs of vigour and bravery, had newly mounted a throne, which he had acquired by faction, from which he had excluded a very antient royal family, and which was likely to totter under him by its own instability, much more if shaken by any violent external impulse. And he hoped, that the very circumstance of his crossing the sea, quitting his own country, and leaving himself no hopes of retreat; as it would astonish the enemy by the boldness of the enterprize, would inspirit his soldiers from despair, and reuze them to sustain the reputation of the Norman arms.

THE Normans, as they had long been distinguished by valour among all the European nations, had at this time attained to the highest pitch of military renown and glory. Besides acquiring by arms such a noble territory in France, besides defending it against continual attempts of the French monarch and all its neighbours, besides exerting many actions, of vigour under their present sovereign; they had, about this very time, revived their antient fame, by the most hazardous exploits and the most wonderful successes; in the other extremity of Europe. A few Norman adventurers in Italy had acquired such an ascendant,

^D W. Walm. p. 99. Higden, p. 285. Matth. West. p. 222. De Gest. Angl. incerto auctore, p. 331.

CHAP. ascendant, not only over the Italians and Greeks, but the
 III. Germans, and Saracens, that they expelled those foreigners,
 procured to themselves ample establishments, and laid the
 foundation of the opulent kingdom of Naples and Sicily^E.
 These enterprizes of men, who were all of them vassals
 in Normandy, many of them banished for faction and
 rebellion, excited the ambition of the haughty William;
 who disdained, after such examples of fortune and valour,
 to be deterred from making an attack on a neighbouring
 country, where he could be supported by the whole
 force of his principality.

THE situation also of Europe inspired William with
 hopes, that, besides his brave Normans, he might employ
 against England the flower of the military force, which
 was dispersed in all the neighbouring states. France,
 Germany, and the low countries, by the progress of the
 feudal institutions, were divided and subdivided into many
 principalities and baronies; and the possessors, enjoying the
 civil jurisdiction within themselves, as well as the right of
 arms, acted, in many respects, as independent sovereigns,
 and maintained their properties and privileges, less by the
 authority of laws, than by their own force and valour.
 A military spirit had universally diffused itself throughout
 Europe; and the several leaders, whose minds were
 elevated by their princely situation, greedily embraced
 the most hazardous enterprizes, and being accustomed to
 nothing from their infancy but recitals of the success at-
 tending wars and battles, they were prompted by a natu-
 ral ambition to imitate those adventures which they heard
 so much celebrated, and which were so much exaggerated
 by the credulity of the age. United, however loosely,
 by their duty to one superior lord, and by their con-
 nexions with the great body of the community, to which
 they belonged, they desired to spread their fame each be-
 yond his own district; and in all assemblies, whether in-
 stituted for civil deliberations, for military expeditions,
 or merely for show and entertainment, to outshine each
 other by the reputation of strength and prowess. Hence
 their genius for chivalry; hence their impatience of peace
 and tranquillity; and hence their readiness to embark in
 any dangerous enterprize, however little interested in its
 failure or success.

WILLIAM,

WILLIAM, by his power, his courage, and his abilities, had long maintained a pre-eminence among those haughty chieftains; and every one who desired to signalize himself by his address in military exercises, or his valour in action, had been ambitious of acquiring a reputation in the court and in the armies of Normandy. Entertained with that hospitality and courtesy, which distinguished the age, they had formed attachments with the prince, and greedily attended to the prospects of glory and advantage, which he promised them in return for their concurrence in an expedition against England. The more grandeur appeared in the attempt, the more it suited their romantic spirit: The fame of the intended invasion was already diffused every where: Multitudes crowded to tender to the duke their service, with that of their vassals and retainers^F: And William found less difficulty in completing his levies, than in choosing the most veteran and experienced forces, and in rejecting the offers of those, who were impatient to acquire fame under so renowned a leader.

BESIDES these advantages, which William owed to his personal valour and good conduct; he was beholden to fortune for procuring him some assistances, and also for removing many obstacles, which it was natural for him to expect in an undertaking, where all his neighbours were so deeply interested. Conan, Count of Brittany, was his mortal enemy, and in order to throw a damp upon the duke's enterprize, he chose this conjuncture for reviving his claim to Normandy itself; and required, that, in case of William's success against England, the possession of that dutchy might devolve to him^G. But Conan died suddenly after making this demand; and Howel, his successor, instead of adopting malignity, or rather the prudence of his predecessor, zealously seconded the duke's views, and sent his eldest son, Alain Fergant, to serve under him with a force of five thousand Britons. The counts of Anjou, and of Flanders encouraged their subjects to engage in the expedition; and even the court of France, though it might justly fear the aggrandizement of so dangerous a vassal, pursued not its interests on this occasion with sufficient vigour and resolution.

VOL. I.

M

Philip

^F Gul. Pictavenfis, p. 198.^G Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap.

CHAP. Philip I. the reigning French monarch, was a minor ;
 III. and William, having communicated his project to the council, having desired assistance, and offered to do homage, in case of his success, for the crown of England, was indeed openly ordered to lay aside all thoughts of the enterprize ; but the earl of Flanders, his father-in-law, being at the head of the regency, favoured underhand his levies, and secretly encouraged the adventurous nobility to enlist under the standard of the duke of Normandy.

THE emperor, Henry IV. besides giving openly all his vassals permission to embark in this expedition, which so much engaged the attention of Europe, promised his protection to the dutchy of Normandy during the absence of the prince, and thereby enabled him to draw his whole force to the attack of England^H. But the most important ally, whom William gained by his negotiations, was the pope, who had a mighty influence over the antient barons, no less devout in their religious principles than valorous in their military enterprizes. The Roman pontiff, after an insensible progress during several ages of darkness and ignorance, began now to lift his head openly above all the princes of Europe ; to assume the office of a mediator, or even an arbiter, in the quarrels of the greatest monarchs ; to interpose himself in all secular affairs ; and to obtrude his dictates as sovereign laws on his obsequious disciples. It was a sufficient motive to Alexander II. the reigning pope, for embracing William's quarrel, that he alone had made an appeal to his tribunal, and rendered him umpire of the dispute between him and Harold ; but there were other advantages, which that pontiff foresaw, must result from the conquest of England by the Norman arms. That kingdom, though at first converted by Romish missionaries, though it had afterwards advanced some farther steps towards subjection under Rome, maintained still a great independence in its ecclesiastical administration ; and forming a world within itself, entirely separated from the rest of Europe, it had hitherto proved inaccessible to those exorbitant claims which supported the grandeur of the papacy. Alexander, therefore, hoped, that the French and Norman barons, if successful in their enterprize, might import

port into that country a more devoted reverence to the holy see, and bring the English churches to a nearer conformity with those of the rest of Europe. He declared immediately in favour of William's claim¹; pronounced Harold a perjured usurper; denounced excommunication against him and his adherents; and the more to encourage the duke of Normandy in his enterprize, he sent him a consecrated banner, and a ring with one of St. Peter's hairs in it². Thus were all the ambition and violence of that invasion covered over safely with the broad mantle of religion.

THE greatest difficulty, which William had to encounter in his preparations, arose from his own subjects in Normandy. The states of the duchy were assembled at Lislebonne; and supplies being demanded for the intended enterprize, which promised so much glory and advantage to their country, there appeared a reluctance in many members, both to grant sums so much beyond the common measure of taxes in that age, and to set a precedent of performing their military service out of their own country. The duke finding it dangerous to solicit them in a body, conferred separately with the richest persons in the province; and beginning with those whose affections he most relied on, he gradually engaged all of them to advance the sums demanded. The count of Longueville seconded him in this negotiation; as did the count of Mortaine, Odo bishop of Baieux, and especially William Fitz-Osborne, count of Breteuil, and constable of the duchy. Every person, when he himself was once engaged, endeavoured to bring over others; and at last the states themselves, after stipulating that this concession should be no precedent for the future, voted, that they would assist their prince to the utmost in his intended enterprize³.

WILLIAM had now assembled a fleet of 3000 vessels, great and small⁴, and had selected an army of 60,000 men from among those numerous supplies, which from every quarter solicited to be received into his service. The

M 2

camp

¹ W. Malm. p. 100. Ingulf, p. 69. Higden, p. 285. Brompton, p. 958. ² Baker, p. 22. edit. 1684. ³ Camden. Introd. ad Britann. p. 212. 2d edit. Gibb. Vertegau, p. 173. ⁴ Gul. Gemet, lib. 7. cap. 34.

CHAP. camp bore a splendid, yet a martial appearance, from the discipline of the men, the vigour of the horses, the lustre of the arms, and accoutrements of both; but above all, from the high names of nobility who engaged under the banners of the duke of Normandy. The most celebrated were Eustace, count of Boulogne, Aimeri de Thouars, Hugh d'Estaples, William d'Evreux, Geoffrey de Rotrou, Roger de Beaumont, William de Warenne, Roger de Montgomeri, Hugh de Grantmesnil, Charles Martel, and Geoffrey Giffard^N. To these bold chieftains William held up the spoils of England as the prize of their valour; and pointing to the opposite shore, called to them, that *there* was the field, on which they must erect trophies to their name, and fix their establishments.

WHILE he was making these mighty preparations, the duke, that he might increase the number of Harold's enemies, excited the inveterate rancour of Tosti, and encouraged him, in concert with Harold Halfager, king of Norway, to infest the coasts of England. Tosti, having collected about sixty vessels in the ports of Flanders, put to sea; and after committing some depredations on the south and east coasts, he sailed to Northumberland, and was there joined by Halfager, who came over with a great armament of three hundred sail^O. The combined fleets entered the Humber, and disembarked the troops, who began to extend their depredations on all sides; when Morcar earl of Northumberland, and Edwin earl of Mercia the king's brothers-in-law, having hastily collected some troops, ventured to give them battle. The action ended in the defeat and flight of these two noblemen^P.

HAROLD, informed of this misfortune, hastened with an army to the protection of his people; and expressed the utmost ardour to shew himself worthy of the crown, which had been conferred upon him. This prince, though he was not sensible of the full extent of his danger, from the great combination against him, had employed every art of popularity to acquire the affections of the public;

^N Ordericus Vitalis, p. 501. ^O Chron. Sax. p. 172. W. Malm. p. 94. H. Hunt. p. 367. Higden, p. 284. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 172. W. Malm. p. 94. Hoveden, p. 448. Ingulf, p. 69. Higden, p. 284. Alur. Beverl. p. 123.

public; and he gave so many proofs of an equitable and prudent administration, that the English found no reason to repent of the choice which they had made of a sovereign^Q. They flocked from all quarters to join his standard; and as soon as he reached the enemy at Stamford, he found himself in a condition of giving them battle. The action was very bloody; but the victory²⁵ was decisive on the side of Harold, and ended in the total rout of the Danes, together with the death of Tosti and Halfager^R. Even the Danish fleet fell into the hands of Harold; who had the generosity to give prince Olave, the son of Halfager, his liberty, and allow him to depart with twenty vessels^S. But he had scarce time to rejoice for this victory, when he received intelligence, that the duke of Normandy was landed with a great army in the south of England.

THE Norman fleet and army had been assembled, early in the summer, at the mouth of the small river Dive, and all the troops had been instantly embarked; but the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour^T. The authority, however, of the duke, the good discipline maintained among the seamen and soldiers, and the great care of supplying them with provisions, had prevented any disorder; when at last the wind became favourable, and enabled them to sail along the coast, till they reached St. Valori. There were, however, several vessels lost in this short passage; and as the winds again proved contrary, the army began to imagine, that heaven had declared against them, and that notwithstanding the Pope's benediction, they were destined to certain ruin^U. These bold warriors, who despised real dangers, were very subject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, some of them even to desert their colours; when the duke, in order to support their drooping hopes, ordered a procession to be made with the reliques of St. Valori^X, and prayers to be said for

^Q W. Malm. p. 93. Hoveden, p. 447. Hist. Eliensis, cap. 44. Sim. Dun. p. 193. Flor. Wigorn. p. 623. ^R Chron. Sax. p. 172. W. Malm. p. 94. H. Hunt. p. 368. Ingulf, p. 69. Hist. Ramef. p. 461. ^S Hoveden, p. 448. Ingulf, p. 69. Higden, p. 285. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 46. ^T Order. Vitalis, p. 500. ^U W. Malm. p. 100. ^X Higden, p. 285. Order. Vitalis, p. 500. Matth. Paris, edit. Paris anno 1644. p. 2.

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III.

for more favourable weather. The winds instantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feast of St. Michael, the tutelar saint of Normandy, the soldiers, fancying they saw the hand of heaven in all these concurring circumstances, set out with the greatest alacrity^Y: They met with no opposition on their passage: A great fleet, which Harold had assembled, and which had cruized all summer off the Isle of Wight, had been dismissed, on his receiving false intelligence, that William, discouraged by the contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aside his preparations^Z. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived without any material loss, at Pevensey in Sussex; and the army quietly disembarked. The duke himself, as he leaped on shore, happened to stumble and fall; but had the presence of mind to turn the omen to his advantage, by calling aloud, that he had taken possession of the country^A. And a soldier, running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked some thatch, which, as if giving him seizine of the kingdom, he presented to his general. The joy and alacrity of William and his whole army was so great, that they were nowise discouraged, even when they heard of Harold's great victory over the Danes; and they seemed rather to wait with impatience the arrival of the enemy^B.

THE victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his interests, and may be regarded as the immediate cause of his ruin. He lost many of his bravest officers and soldiers in the action; and he disgusted the rest, by refusing to distribute the Danish spoils among them^C: A conduct which was little agreeable to his usual generosity of temper; but which his desire of sparing the people, in the war which impended over him from the duke of Normandy, had probably occasioned. He hastened by quick marches to reach this new invader; but tho' he was reinforced at London and other places with fresh troops, he found himself also weakened by the desertion of his old soldiers, who from fatigue and discontent secretly withdrew from their colours. His brother Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehensions of the event;

^Y W. Malm. p. 100. ^Z Hoveden, p. 448. Sim. Dun. p. 104. Diceto, p. 479. ^A Baker, p. 22. ^B Gul. Pic. p. 109. ^C W. Malm. p. 94. Higden, p. 285.

event; and remonstrated with the king, that it would be better policy to prolong the war, or at least, to spare his own person in the action. He urged to him, that the desperate situation of the duke of Normandy made it requisite for that prince to bring matters to a speedy decision, and put his whole fortune on the issue of a battle; but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his subjects, provided of every supply, had more infallible and less dangerous methods of ensuring to himself the victory: That the Norman troops, elevated on the one hand with the highest hopes, and seeing on the other, no resource in case of a discomfiture, would fight to the last extremity; and being the flower of all the warriors of the continent, must be regarded as formidable to the English: That if their first fire and spirit, which is always most dangerous, were allowed to languish for want of action; if they were harassed with skirmishes, straitened in provisions, and fatigued with the bad weather and deep roads during the winter-season, which was approaching, they must fall an easy and a bloodless prey to their enemy: That if a general action was delayed, the English, sensible of the imminent danger, to which their properties, as well as liberties, were exposed from these rapacious invaders, would hasten from all quarters to his assistance, and would render his army invincible: That at least, if he thought it necessary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expose his own person; but reserve, in case of disastrous accidents, some resource to the liberty and independance of the kingdom: And that having once been so unfortunate, as to be constrained to swear, and that upon the holy reliques, to support the pretensions of the duke of Normandy, it were better that another person should command the army, who, not being bound by these sacred ties, might give the soldiers more certain hopes of a prosperous issue to the quarrel^D.

HAROLD was deaf to all these remonstrances; and being elated with his past prosperity, as well as stimulated by his native courage, he resolved to give battle in person; and for that purpose, he drew near to the Normans, who had removed their camp and fleet to Hastings, where they

^D W. Malm. p. 100. Higden, p. 286. Order. Vitalis, p. 500. Math. West. p. 222.

C H A P. III. they fixed their quarters. He was so confident of success, that he sent a message to the duke, promising him a sum of money, if he would depart the kingdom, without effusion of blood: But his offer was rejected with disdain; and William, not to be behind with his enemy in vaunting, sent him a message by some monks, requiring him either to resign the kingdom, or to hold it of him in fealty, or to submit their cause to the arbitration of the pope, or to fight him in single combat^E. Harold replied, that the God of battles would soon be the arbiter of all their differences^F.

14th October.

THE English and Normans now prepared themselves for this important decision; but the aspect of things, on the night before the battle, was very different in the two camps. The English spent the time in riot, and jollity, and disorder; the Normans in silence and prayer, and in the other functions of their religion^G. On the morning, the duke called together the most considerable of his chieftains, and made them a speech suitable to the occasion. He represented to them, that the event which they and he had long wished for, was approaching; and the whole fortune of the war now depended on their swords, and would be decided in a single action: That never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they considered the prize which would attend their victory, or the inevitable destruction which must ensue upon their discomfiture: That if their martial and veteran bands could once break those raw soldiers, who had rashly dared to approach them, they conquered a kingdom at one blow, and were justly entitled to all its possessions as the reward of their prosperous valour: That, on the contrary, if they remitted in the least their wonted prowess, an enraged enemy hung upon their rear, the sea met them in their retreat, and an ignominious death was the certain punishment of their imprudent cowardice: That by collecting so numerous and brave a host, he had ensured every human means of conquest; and the commander of the enemy, by his criminal conduct, had given him just cause to hope for the favour of heaven, in whose hands alone lay the event of wars and battles: And that a perjured usurper, anathematized

^E W. Malm. p. 100. Higden, p. 286. ^F Higden, p. 286. ^G W. Malm. p. 101. De Gest. Angl. p. 332.

atized by the sovereign pontiff, and conscious of his own breach of faith, would be struck with terror on their appearance, and would prognosticate to himself that fate which his multiplied crimes had so justly merited¹¹. The duke next divided his army into three lines: The first, headed by Montgomery, consisted of archers and light armed infantry: The second, commanded by Martel, was composed of his bravest battalions, heavy armed, and ranged in close order: His cavalry, at whose head he placed himself, formed the third line; and were so disposed, that they stretched beyond the infantry; and flanked each wing of the army¹. He ordered the signal of battle to sound; and the whole army, moving at once, and singing the hymn or song of Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne^K, advanced, in order and with alacrity, towards the enemy.

HAROLD had seized the advantage of a rising ground and having besides drawn some trenches to secure his flanks, he resolved to stand upon the defensive, and to avoid all action with the cavalry, in which he was inferior^L. The Kentish men were placed in the van; a post which they had always claimed as their due: The Londoners guarded the standard: And the king himself, accompanied by his two valiant brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, dismounting from horseback, placed himself at the head of his infantry, and expressed his resolution to conquer or to perish in the action^M. The first attack of the Normans was desperate, but was received with equal valour by the English; and after a furious combat, which remained long undecided, the former, overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard pressed by the enemy, began first to relax their vigour, then to give ground; and confusion was spreading among the ranks; when William, who found himself on the brink of destruction, hastened, with a select band, to the relief of his dismayed forces^N. His presence restored the action; the English were obliged to retreat with loss; and the duke ordering his second line to advance, renewed the attack with fresh forces and with redoubled courage. Finding

¹¹ H. Hunt, p. 368. Brompton, p. 959. Gul. Pict. p. 201.
¹ Gul. Pict. 201. Order. Vital. p. 501. ^K W. Malm. p. 101. Higden, p. 286. Matth. West. p. 223. Du Cange's Glossary in verbo *Cantileua Rolandi*. ^L Gul. Pict. p. 201. Order. Vitalis, p. 501. ^M W. Malm. p. 101. ^N Gul. Pict. p. 202. Order. Vitalis, p. 501.

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III.

ing that the enemy, aided by the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, still made a vigorous resistance, he tried a stratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which seemed adviseable in his desperate situation, when if he gained not a decisive victory, he was totally undone: He commanded his troops to make a hasty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice succeeded against these unexperienced troops, who, heated by the action, and sanguine in their hopes, precipitantly followed the Normans into the plain^o. William gave orders, that at once the infantry should face about upon their pursuers, and the cavalry make an assault upon their wings, and both of them pursue the advantage, which the surprize and terror of the enemy must give them in that critical and decisive moment. The English were repulsed with great slaughter, and drove back to the hill; where being rallied again by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithstanding their loss, to maintain the post and continue the combat. The duke tried the same stratagem a second time with the same success; but even after this double advantage, he still found a great body of the English, who maintaining themselves in firm array, seemed determined to dispute the victory to the last extremity. He ordered his heavy armed infantry to make the assault upon them; while his archers, placed behind, should gall the enemy, who were exposed by the situation of the ground, and who were intent in defending themselves against the swords and spears of the assailants^p. By this disposition he at last prevailed: Harold was slain by an arrow, while he was combating with great bravery at the head of his men &c. His two brothers shared the same fate: And the English, discouraged by the fall of these princes, gave ground on all sides, and were pursued with great slaughter by the victorious Normans. A few troops however of the vanquished dared still to turn upon their pursuers; and taking them in deep and miry ground, obtained some revenge for

^o W. Malmesb. p. 101. H. Huntingdon, p. 368. Higden, p. 286. Brompton, p. 960. Gul. Pict. p. 202. M. Paris, p. 3. ^p Diceto, p. 480. & W. Malm. p. 101. H. Hunt. p. 369. Ingulf, p. 69. Sim. Dun. p. 195.

for the slaughter and dishonour of the day^R. But the appearance of the duke obliged them to seek their safety by flight, and darkness saved them, from any farther pursuit by the enemy. CHAP. III.

Thus was gained by William, duke of Normandy, the great and decisive victory of Hastings, after a battle which was fought from morning till sunset^S, and which seemed worthy, by the heroic feats of valour displayed by both armies, and by both commanders, to decide the fate of a mighty kingdom. William had three horses killed under him; and there fell near fifteen thousand men on the side of the Normans^T: The loss was still more considerable on that of the vanquished; besides the death of the king and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generously restored without ransom to his mother^V. The Norman army left not the field of battle without giving thanks to heaven, in the most solemn manner, for their victory: And the prince, having refreshed his forces, prepared to push to the utmost his advantage against the divided, dismayed, and discomfited English.

A P P E N-

^R Gul. Pict. p. 203. Order. Vitalis, p. 501. ^S Alur. Beverl. p. 124. Ypod. Neust. p. 436. ^T Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 36. ^V W. Malin. p. 102. Higden, p. 286. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 46.

APPENDIX I.

The ANGLO-SAXON GOVERNMENT and MANNERS.

*First Saxon government—Succession of the kings—
The Wittenagemot—The aristocracy—The several orders of men—Courts of justice—Criminal law
— Rules of proof—Military force—Public revenue—Value of money—Manners.*

Appendix I.

THE government of the Germans, and that of all the northern nations who established themselves on the ruins of Rome, were always extremely free; and those fierce people, accustomed to independence and enured to arms, were more guided by persuasion than authority, in the submission which they paid their princes. The military despotism, which had taken place in the Roman empire, and which, previously to the irruption of these conquerors, had sunk the genius of men, and destroyed every noble principle of science and virtue, was unable to resist the vigorous efforts of a free people; and Europe, as from a new epoch, rekindled her antient spirit, and shook off the base servitude to arbitrary will and authority, under which she had so long laboured. The free constitutions then established, however impaired by the encroachments of succeeding princes, still preserve an air of independance and legal administration, which distinguish the European nations; and if that part of the globe maintain sentiments of liberty, honour, equity, and valour superior to the rest of mankind, it owes these advantages chiefly to the seeds implanted by those generous barbarians.

First Sax-
on go-
vernment.

THE Saxons, who subdued Britain, as they enjoyed great liberty in their own country obstinately retained that invaluable possession in their new settlement; and they imported into this island the same principles of independance, which they had inherited from their ancestors.

cestors. The chieftains (for such they were more properly than kings or princes) who commanded them in those military expeditions, still possessed a very limited authority? and as the Saxons exterminated, rather than subdued the antient inhabitants, they were indeed transplanted into a new territory, but preserved unaltered all their civil and military institutions. The language was pure Saxon; even the names of places, which often remain while the tongue entirely changes, were almost all affixed by the new conquerors; the manners and customs were wholly German; and the same picture of a fierce and bold liberty, which is drawn by the masterly pencil of Tacitus, will apply to these founders of the English government. The king, so far from being entitled to an arbitrary power, was only considered as the first among the citizens; his authority depended more on his personal qualities than on his station; he was even so far on a level with the other inhabitants, that a stated price was affixed to his head, and a legal fine was levied from his murderer, which, though proportioned to his station, and superior to that paid for the life of a subject, was a sensible mark of his subordination to the community.

It is easy to imagine, that an independant people, so Succession little restrained by laws, and cultivated by science, would of the not be very strict in maintaining a regular succession of kings. their princes. Tho' they paid a great respect to the royal family, and ascribed to them an undisputed superiority, they either had no rule, or none that was steadily observed, in filling the vacant throne; and present convenience in that emergency was more attended to than general principles. We are not however to suppose, that the crown was considered as altogether elective; and that a regular plan was traced by the constitution for supplying, by the suffrages of the people, every vacancy made by the demise of the first magistrate. If any king on his death left a son of an age and capacity fit for government, the young prince naturally stepped into the throne: If he was a minor, his uncle, or the next prince of the blood, was promoted to the government, and left the sceptre to his posterity: Any sovereign, by taking previous measures with the leading men, had it greatly in his power to appoint his successor: All these changes; and indeed the ordinary administration of government,

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vernment, required the exprefs concurrence, or at least the tacit consent of the people; but present possession, however obtained, went far towards procuring their obedience, and the idea of any right which was once excluded, was but feeble and imperfect. This is so much the case in all barbarous monarchies, and occurs so often in the history of the Anglo-Saxons, that we cannot consistently entertain any other notion of their government. The idea of an hereditary succession in authority is so natural to men, and is so much fortified by the usual rule in transmitting private possessions, that it must retain a great influence on every society, who do not exclude it by the refinements of a republican constitution. But as there is a sensible difference between government and private possessions, and every one is not equally qualified for exercising the one as for enjoying the other, a people, who are not sensible of the general advantages attending a fixed rule, are apt to make great leaps in the succession, and frequently to pass over the person, who, had he possessed the requisite years and abilities, would have been thought entitled to the authority. Thus, these monarchies are not, strictly speaking, either elective or hereditary; and though the destination of a prince may often be followed in appointing his successor, they can as little be regarded as wholly testamentary. The suffrages of the states may sometimes establish a sovereign; but they more frequently recognize him whom they find established: A few great men take the lead; the people, overawed and influenced, acquiesce in the government; and the reigning prince, provided he be of the royal family, passes undisputably for the legal sovereign.

The Wit-
tenage-
mot.

It is confessed, that our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon history and antiquities is too imperfect to afford us means of determining with certainty all the prerogatives of the crown and privileges of the people, or of giving an exact delineation of that government. It is probable also, that the constitution might be somewhat different in the different nations of the Heptarchy, and that it changed considerably during the course of six centuries, which elapsed from the first invasion of the Saxons till the Norman conquest^x. But most of these differences and changes,

with

^x We know of one change, not inconsiderable in the Saxon constitution. The Saxon Annals, p. 49, inform us, that it

with their causes and effects, are unknown to us: It only appears, that, at all times, and in all the kingdoms, there was a national council, called a Wittenagemot or assembly of the wise men, (for that is the import of the term) whose consent was requisite for enacting laws, and for ratifying the chief acts of public administration. The preambles to all the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmond, Edgar, Ethelred, and Edward the Confessor; even those to the laws of Canute, though a kind of conqueror, put this matter beyond controversy, and carry proofs every where of a limited and legal government. But who were the constituent members of this Wittenagemot has not been determined with certainty by antiquarians. It is agreed, that the bishops and abbots^Y were an essential part; and it is also evident, from the tenor of these antient laws, that the Wittenagemot enacted statutes which regulated the ecclesiastical as well as civil government, and that those dangerous principles, by which the church is totally severed from the states, were hitherto unknown to the Anglo-Saxons^Z. It also appears, that the aldermen or governors of counties, who, after the Danish times, were often called earls^A, were admitted into this council,

it was then the prerogative of the king to name the dukes, earls, aldermen and sheriffs of the counties. After, a contemporary writer, informs us, that Alfred deposed all the ignorant aldermen, and appointed men of more capacity in their place: Yet the laws of Edward the Confessor, § 35, say expressly, that the heretoghs or dukes, and the sheriffs, were chosen by the freeholders in the folknote, a county court, which was assembled once a year, and where all the freeholders swore allegiance to the king.

^Y Sometimes abbesses were admitted; at least, they often sign the king's charters of grants. Spelm. Gloss. in verbo *parliamentum*.

^Z Wilkins passim.

^A It appears from the antient translations of the Saxon annals and laws, and from king Alfred's translation of Bede, as well as from all the antient historians, that *comes* in Latin, *alderman* in Saxon, and *earl* in Dano-Saxon were quite synonymous. There is only a clause of a law of king Athelstan's (see Spelm. Conc. p. 406.) which has stumbled some antiquarians, and has made them imagine that an earl was superior to an alderman. The weregild or the price of an earl's blood

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cil, and gave their consent to the public statutes. But besides the prelates and aldermen, there is also mention of the wites or wise-men, as a component part of the Wittenagemot; but who *these* were is not so clearly ascertained by the laws or the history of that period. The matter would probably be of difficult discussion, even were it examined impartially; but as our parties have chosen to divide on this point, the question has been disputed with the greater acrimony, and the arguments on both sides have become, on that account, the more captivous and deceitful. Our monarchical faction maintain, that these *wites* or *sapientes* were the judges or men learned in the law: The popular party assert them to have been representatives of the boroughs, or what we now call the commons.

THE expressions, employed by all the antient historians in mentioning the Wittenagemot, seem to contradict the latter supposition. The members are almost always called the *principes*, *satrapæ*, *optimates*, *magnates*, *proceres*; terms which seem to suppose an aristocracy, and to exclude the commons. The boroughs also, from the low state of commerce, were so small and poor, and the inhabitants lived in such dependance on the great menⁿ, that it seems nowise probable they would be admitted as a part of the national councils. The commons are well known to have had no share in the governments established by the Franks, Burgundians, and other northern nations; and we may conclude, that the Saxons, who remained longer barbarous and uncivilized than these tribes, would never think of conferring such an extraordinary privilege

is there fixed at 15000 thrimfas, equal to that of an archbishop: whereas that of a bishop and alderman is only 8000 thrimfas. To solve this difficulty we must have recourse to Selden's conjecture, (see his *Titles of Honour*, chap. v. 603, 604.) that the term of earl was in the age of Athelstan just beginning to be in use in England, and stood at that time for the atheling or prince of the blood, heir to the crown. This he confirms by a law of Canute, § 55, where an atheling and an archbishop are put upon the same footing. In another law of the same Athelstan the weregild of the prince or atheling is said to be 15,000 thrimfas. See Wilkins, p. 71. He is therefore the same who is called earl in the former law.

^B Brady's treatise of English boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5; &c.

privilege on trade and industry. The military profession alone was honourable among all those conquerors: The warriors subsisted by their possessions in land: They became considerable by their influence over their vassals, retainers, tenants, and slaves: And it had need of strong proofs to convince us that they would admit any of a rank so much inferior as the burghesses, to share with them in the legislative authority. Tacitus indeed affirms, that, among the antient Germans, the consent of all the members of the community was required in every important deliberation; but he speaks not of representatives; and this antient practice, mentioned by the Roman historians, could only have place in small tribes, where every citizen might without inconvenience be assembled upon any extraordinary emergency. After principalities became more extensive; after the differences of property had formed distinctions more important than those arising from personal strength and valour; we may conclude, that the national assemblies must have been more limited in their number, and composed only of the more considerable citizens.

But though we must exclude the burghesses or commons from the Saxon Wittenagemot; there is some necessity for supposing, that this assembly consisted of other members besides the prelates, abbots, aldermen, and the judges or privy council. For as all these, excepting some of the ecclesiastics^c, were antiently appointed by the king, had there been no other legislative authority, the royal power had been in a great measure despotic, contrary to the tenor of all the historians, and to the practice of all the northern nations. We may, therefore, conclude, that the more considerable proprietors of land were, without any election, constituent members of the national assembly; and there is reason to think, that forty hides, or between four and five thousand acres, was the estate requisite for entitling the possessor to this honourable

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^c There is some reason to think that the bishops were sometimes chosen by the Wittenagemot, and confirmed by the king. Eddius, cap. 2. The abbots in the monasteries of the royal foundation were antiently named by the king; though Edgar gave the monks the election, and only reserved to himself the ratification. This destination was afterwards frequently violated;

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privilege. There is a passage of an antient author^D from which it appears, that a person of very noble birth, even one allied to the crown, was not esteemed a *princeps* (the term usually employed by antient historians when the Wittenagemot is mentioned) till he had acquired a fortune of that extent. Nor need we imagine, that the public council would become disorderly or confused by admitting so great a multitude. The landed property of England was probably in few hands during the Saxon times; at least, during the latter part of that period: And as men had small ambition of attending these public councils, there was no danger of the assembly's becoming too numerous for the dispatch of the little business, which was brought before them.

The aristocracy.

It is certain, that, whatever we may determine concerning the constituent members of the Wittenagemot, in whom the legislature resided, the Anglo-Saxon government, in the period preceding the Norman conquest, was become extremely aristocratical: The royal authority was very limited; the people, even if admitted to that assembly, were of little or no weight or consideration. We have hints given us in the historians of the great power and riches of particular noblemen: And it could not but happen, after the abolition of the Heptarchy, when the king lived at a distance from the provinces, that these great proprietors, who resided on their estates, would much augment their authority over their vassals and retainers, and over all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Hence the immeasurable power assumed by Harold, Godwin, Leofric, Siward, Morcar, Edwin, Edric and Alfric, who controlled the authority of the kings, and rendered themselves quite necessary in the government. The two latter, though detested by the people, on account of their joining a foreign enemy, still preserved their power and influence; and we may therefore conclude, that their authority was founded, not on popularity, but on family rights and possession. There is one Athelstan, mentioned in the reign of the king of that name, who is called alderman of all England, and is said to be half-king; though the monarch himself was a prince
of

lated; and the abbots as well as bishops were afterwards all appointed by the court; as we learn from Ingulf, a writer contemporary to the conquest.

^D Hist. Eliensis, lib. 2. cap. 40.

of valour and ability^c. And we find, that in the latter Saxon times, and in these alone, the great offices went from father to son, and became, in a manner, hereditary in the families^d. I.

THE circumstances attending the invasions of the Danes, would also serve much to increase the power of the principal nobility. These free-booters made unexpected inroads on all quarters; and there was a necessity, that each county should resist them by its own force, and under the conduct of its own magistrates, and nobility. For the same reason, that a general war, managed by the united efforts of the whole state, commonly increases the power of the crown; these private wars and inroads turned to the advantage of the aldermen and nobles.

AMONG that military and turbulent people, so averse to commerce and the arts, so little enured to industry, justice was commonly very ill executed, and great oppression and violence seem to have prevailed. These disorders would be increased by the exorbitant power of the aristocracy; and would, in their turn, contribute to increase it. Men, not daring to rely on the guardianship of the laws, were obliged to devote themselves to the service of some chieftain, whose orders they followed even to the disturbance of the government or the injury of their fellow-citizens, and who afforded them in return protection from any insult or injustice by strangers. Hence we find, by the extracts which Dr. Brady has given us from Domesday, that almost all the inhabitants even of boroughs, had placed themselves in the clientship of some particular nobleman, whose patronage they purchased by annual payments, and whom they were obliged to consider as their sovereign, more than the king himself, or

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even

^c Hist. Ramef. § 3. p. 387.

^d Roger Hoveden, giving the reason why William the Conqueror made Cospatric earl of Northumberland, says, *Nam ex materno sanguine attinebat ad eum honor illius comitatus. Erat enim ex matre Algitba, filia Uthredi comitis.* See also Sim. Dun. p. 205. We see in those instances, the same tendency towards rendering offices hereditary, which took place, during a more early period, on the continent; and which had already operated its full effect.

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even the legislature^D. A client, though a freeman, was supposed so much to belong to his patron, that his murderer was obliged by law to pay a fine to the latter, as a compensation for his loss; in like manner as he paid a fine to the master for the murder of his slave^E. Men, who were of a more considerable rank, but not powerful enough, each to support himself by his own independent authority, entered into formal confederacies together, and composed a kind of separate republic, which rendered itself formidable to all aggressors. Dr. Hickes has preserved a very curious Saxon bond of this kind, which he calls a *Sodalitium*, and which contains many particulars characteristical of the manners and customs of the times^F. The associates are there said to be all of them gentlemen of Cambridgeshire; and they swear before the holy reliques to observe their confederacy, and to be faithful to each other: They promise to bury any of the associates who dies, in whatever place he had appointed; to contribute to his funeral charges, and to attend at his interment; and whoever is wanting to this last duty, binds himself to pay a measure of honey. When any of the associates is in danger, and calls for the assistance of his fellows, they promise, besides flying to his succour, to give information to the sheriff; and if he be negligent in protecting the person exposed to hazard, they engage to levy a fine of one pound upon him: If the president of the society himself be wanting in this particular, he binds himself to pay one pound; unless he has the reasonable excuse of sickness, or of duty to his superior. When any of the associates is murdered, they are to exact eight pounds from the murderer; and if he refuses to pay it, they are to prosecute him for the sum at their joint expence. If any of the associates, who happens to be poor, kills a man, the society are to contribute by a certain proportion to pay his fine: A mark a-piece, if the fine be 700 shillings; less if the person killed be a clown or ceorle; the half of that sum, again, if he be a Wealhman. But where any of the associates kills a man, wilfully and without provocation,

^D Brady's treatise of Boroughs, 3, 4, 5, &c. The case was the same with the freemen in the country. See pref. to his hist. p. 8, 9, 10, &c.

^E LL. Edw. Conf. § 8. apud Ingulf. Epist. p. 21.

^F Dissert.

cation, he must himself pay the fine. If any of the associates kills any of his fellows, in a like criminal manner, besides, paying the usual fine to the relations of the deceased, he must pay eight pounds to the society, or renounce the benefit of it: In which case they bind themselves, under the penalty of one pound, never to eat or drink with him, except in the presence of the king, bishop, or alderman. There are other regulations to protect themselves and their servants from all injuries, to revenge such as are committed, and to prevent their giving abusive language to each other; and the fine, which they engage to pay for that offence, is a measure of honey.

It is not to be doubted, but a confederacy of this kind must have been a great source of friendship and attachment, when men lived in perpetual danger from enemies, robbers and oppressors, and received protection chiefly from their personal valour, and from the assistance of their friends or patrons. As animosities were then more violent, connexions were also more intimate, whether voluntary or derived from blood: The most remote degree of propinquity was regarded: An indelible memory of benefits was preserved: Severe vengeance was taken of injuries, both from a point of honour, and as the best means of future security: And the civil union, being weak, many private confederacies were entered into to supply its place, and to procure men that safety, which the laws and their own innocence were not alone able to insure to them.

ON the whole, notwithstanding the seeming liberty or rather licentiousness of the Anglo-Saxons, the great body of the people, in those ages, really enjoyed much less true liberty, than where the execution of the laws is the most severe, and where subjects are reduced to the strictest subordination and dependance on the civil magistrate. The reason is derived from the excess itself of that liberty. Men must guard themselves at any price against insults and injuries; and where they receive not protection from the laws and magistrate, they will seek it by submission to superiors, and by herding in some inferior confederacy, which acts under the direction of a powerful chieftain. And thus all anarchy is the immediate cause of tyranny, if not over the state, at least over many of the individuals.

THE

Appendix
I.The several orders
of men.

THE German Saxons, as the other nations of that continent, were divided into three ranks of men, the noble, the free, and the slaves^G. This distinction they brought over with them into Britain.

THE nobles were called thanes; and were of two kinds, the king's thanes and lesser thanes. The latter seem to have been dependant on the former; and to have received lands, for which they paid rent, services, or attendance in peace and war^H. We know of no other title, which raised any one to the rank of thane, except noble birth and the possession of land. The former was always much regarded by all the German nations even in their most barbarous state; and as the Saxon nobility had few expensive pleasures to dissipate their fortune, and the commons little trade or industry by which they could accumulate riches, these two ranks of men, even though they were not separated by positive laws, might remain long distinct, and the noble families continue many ages in opulence and splendor. There were no middle rank of men, who could mix gradually with their superiors, and procure to themselves insensibly honour and distinction. If by any extraordinary accident, a mean person acquired riches, a circumstance so singular made him be known and remarked; he became the object of envy, as well as indignation, to all the nobles; he would have great difficulty to defend what he had acquired; and he would find it impossible to protect himself from oppression, except by courting the patronage of some great chieftain, and paying a large price for his safety.

THERE are two statutes among the Saxons laws, which seem calculated to confound these different ranks of men; that of Athelstan, by which a merchant, who had made three long sea voyages on his own account, was intitled to the quality of thane^I; and that of the same prince, by which a ceorle or husbandman, who had been able to purchase five hydes of land, and had a chapel, a kitchen, a hall and bell, was raised to the same distinction^K. But the opportunities were so few, by which a merchant or ceorle could thus exalt himself, above his rank, that the law could never overcome the reigning prejudices; the distinction

^G Nithard. hist. lib. 4.
40. ^I Wilkins, p. 71.
515. Wilkins, p. 70.

^H Spelm. Feuds and Tenures, p.
^K Selden, Titles of honour, p.

distinction between noble and base blood would still be indelible; and the well-born thanes would entertain the highest contempt for those legal and factitious ones. Tho' we are not informed of any of these circumstances by antient historians, they are so much founded on the nature of things, that we may admit them as a necessary and infallible consequence of the situation of the kingdom during those ages.

THE cities appear by Domesday-book to have been at the conquest little better than villages^L. York itself, though it was always the second, at least the third^M city in England, and was the capital of a great province, which never was thoroughly united with the rest, contained then but 1418 families^N. Malmesbury tells us^O, that the great distinction between the Anglo-Saxon nobility and the French or Norman, was that the latter built magnificent and stately castles; whereas the former consumed their immense fortunes on riot and hospitality in mean houses. We may thence infer, that the arts in general were much less advanced in England than in France; a greater number of idle servants and retainers lived about the great families; and as these, even in France, were powerful enough to disturb the execution of the laws, we may judge of the authority, acquired by the aristocracy in England. When earl Godwin besieged the Confessor in London, he summoned together from all parts his huscarles, or houseceorles and retainers, and thereby obliged his sovereign to accept of the conditions, which he was pleased to impose upon him.

THE

^L Winchester, being the capital of the West-Saxon monarchy, was antiently a considerable city. Gul. Pict. p. 219.

^M Norwich contained 738 houses, Exeter, 315, Ipswich, 538, Northampton, 60, Hertford, 146, Canterbury, 262, Bath, 64, Southampton 84, Warwick, 113. See Brady of Boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. These are the most considerable he mentions. The account of them is extracted from Domesday-book.

^N Brady's treatise of boroughs, p. 10. There were six wards, besides the archbishop's palace; and five of these wards contained the number of families here mentioned, which at the rate of five persons to a family make about 7000 souls. The sixth ward was laid waste.

^O P. 102, See also de Gest. Angl. 333.

THE lower rank of freemen were denominated *ceorles* among the Anglo-Saxons; and where they were industrious, they were chiefly employed in husbandry: Whence a *ceorle*, and a husbandman, became in a manner synonymous terms. They cultivated the farms of the nobility or thanes, for which they paid rent; and they seem to have been removeable at pleasure. For there is little mention of leases among the Anglo-Saxons: The pride of the nobility, together with the general ignorance of writing, must have rendered those contracts very rare, and must have kept the husbandmen in a very dependant condition. The rents of farms were then chiefly paid in kind^p.

BUT the most numerous rank by far in the community seems to have been the slaves or villains, who were the property of their lords, and were consequently incapable, themselves, of all property. Dr. Brady assures us, from a survey of Domesday-book^q, that, in all the counties of England, the far greater part of the land was occupied by them, and that the husbandmen, and still more the socmen, who were tenants, that could not be removed at pleasure, were very few in comparison. This was not the case with the German nations, as far as we can collect from the account given us by Tacitus. The perpetual wars in the Heptarchy, and the depredations of the Danes, seem to have been the cause of this great alteration with the Anglo-Saxons. The prisoners taken in battle, or carried off in the frequent inroads, were reduced to slavery; and became, by right of war^r, entirely at the disposal of their lords. Great property in the nobles, especially if joined to an irregular administration of justice, naturally favours the power of the aristocracy; but still more so, if the practice of slavery be admitted, and has become very common. The nobility not only possess the influence which always attend riches, but also the power, which the laws give them over their slaves and villains. It becomes then difficult, and almost impossible for a private man to remain altogether free and independent.

THERE

^p LL. Inq. § 70. These laws fixed the rents for a hyde; but it is difficult to convert it into modern measures.

^q General preface to his hist. p. 7, 9. &c.

^r LL. Edg. § 14. apud Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p. 271.

THERE were two kinds of slaves among the Anglo-Saxons; household slaves, after the manner of the antients, and prædial or rustic, after the manner of the Germans^s. These latter resembled the serfs, which are at present to be met with in Poland, Denmark, and some places in Germany. The power of a master over his slaves was not unlimited among the Anglo-Saxons, as it was among their ancestors. If a man beat out his slave's eye or teeth, the slave recovered his liberty^t: If he killed him, he paid a fine to the king; provided the slave died within a day after the wound or blow: Otherwise it passed unpunished^u. The selling themselves or children into slavery was always the practice with the German nations^x, and was continued by the Anglo-Saxons^y.

THE great lords and abbots among the Anglo-Saxons possessed a criminal jurisdiction within their territories, and could punish without appeal any thieves or robbers whom they caught there^z. This institution must have had a very contrary effect to that intended, and must have procured robbers a sure protection in the lands of such noblemen as did not sincerely mean to discourage those irregularities.

BUT though the general strain of the Anglo-Saxon Courts of government seems to have become aristocratical, there were still considerable remains of the antient democracy, which were not indeed sufficient to protect the lowest of the people, without the patronage of some great lord, but might give security, and even some degree of dignity, to the gentry or inferior nobility. The administration of justice, in particular by the courts of Decennary, the Hundred and the County, were well calculated to defend general liberty, and to restrain the exorbitant power of the nobles. In the county courts or shire-motes, all the freeholders were assembled twice a year, and received appeals from the other inferior courts. They there decided all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil; and the bishop,

^s Spelm. Gloss. in verb. *Servus*.

^t LL. Ælf. § 20.

^u Ibid. § 17.

^x Tacit de morb. Germ.

^y LL. Inz, § 11. LL. Ælf. § 12.

^z Higden, lib. 1.

cap. 50. LL. Edw. Conf. § 26. Spelm. Conc. vol. i. p. 415. Gloss. in verb. *Haligemot et Infangenbese*.

Appendix I. bishop, together with the alderman or earl, presided over them^C. The affair was determined in a summary manner, without much pleading, formality, or delay, by a majority of voices; and the bishop and alderman had no further authority than to keep order among the freeholders, and interpose with their opinion^D. Where justice was denied during three sessions by the Hundred, and then by the County court, there lay an appeal to the king's court^E; but this was not practised on slight occasions. The alderman had a third of the fines levied in these courts^F; and as most of the punishments were then pecuniary, this perquisite formed a considerable part of the profits belonging to his office. The two thirds also, which went to the king, made no contemptible share of the public revenue. Any freeholder was fined who absented himself thrice from these courts^G.

As the extreme ignorance of the age made deeds and writings very rare, the County or Hundred court was the place where the most remarkable civil transactions were finished, in order to preserve a memorial of them, and prevent all future disputes. Here testaments were promulgated, slaves manumitted, bargains of sale concluded; and sometimes, for greater security, the most considerable of these deeds were inserted in the blank leaves of the parish Bible, which thus became a kind of register, too sacred to be falsified. It was not unusual to add to the deed an imprecation on all such as should be guilty of that crime^H.

AMONG a people, who lived in so simple a manner as the Anglo-Saxons; the judicial power is always of greater importance than the legislative. There were few or no taxes imposed by the states: There were few statutes enacted; and the nation was less governed by laws, than by customs, which admitted a great latitude of interpretation. Though it should, therefore, be allowed, that the Wittenagemot was altogether composed of the principal nobility, the county-courts, where all the freeholders were admitted, and which regulated all the daily occurrences of life, formed a very wide basis for the government,

^C LL. Edg. § 5. Wilkins, p. 78. LL. Canut. § 17. Wilkins, p. 136.

^D Hickes Dissert. Epist. p. 2, 3, 4, 5. 6, 7, 8.

^E LL. Edg. § 2. Wilkins, p. 77. LL. Canut. § 18. apud Wilkins, p. 136.

^F LL. Edw. Conf. § 31.

^G LL. Ethelft. § 20.

^H Hickes Dissert. Epist.

government, and were no contemptible checks on the aristocracy. But there is another power still more important than either the judicial or legislative; and that is the power of injuring or serving by immediate force and violence, for which it is difficult to obtain redress in courts of justice. In all extensive governments, where the execution of the laws is feeble, this power naturally falls into the hands of the principal nobility; and the degree of it which prevails, cannot be determined so much by the public statutes, as by small strokes of history, by particular customs, and sometimes by the reason and nature of things. The Highlands of Scotland have been long entitled by law to every privilege of British subjects; but it was not till very lately that the common people could in fact enjoy these privileges.

THE powers of all the members of the Anglo-Saxon government are disputed among historians and antiquarians; and the extreme obscurity of the subject, even though faction had never entered into the question, would naturally have begot those controversies. But the great influence of the lords over their slaves and tenants, the clientship of the burghers, the total want of a middling rank of men, the total want also of lawyers, who did not then form a separate profession, the extent of the monarchy, the loose execution of the laws, the continued disorders and convulsions of the state; all these circumstances evince, that the Anglo-Saxon government became at last extremely aristocratical; and the events during the period immediately preceding the conquest, confirm this inference or conjecture.

BOTH the punishments inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon Criminal courts of judicature, and the methods of proof employed in all causes, appear somewhat singular, and are very different from those which prevail at present among all civilized nations.

WE must conceive, that the antient Germans were very little removed from the original state of nature: The social confederacy among them was more martial than civil: They had chiefly in view the means of attack or defence against public enemies, not those of protection against their fellowcitizens: Their possessions were so slender and so equal, that they were not exposed to great danger; and the natural bravery of the people made every man trust to himself and to his particular friends for his defence

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defence or vengeance. This defect in the political union drew much closer the knot of particular confederacies: An insult upon any man was regarded by all his relations and associates as a common injury: They were bound by honour, as well as by a sense of general interest, to revenge his death, or any violence which he had suffered: They retaliated on the aggressor by like violences; and if he was protected, as was natural and usual, by his own clan, the quarrel was spread still wider, and bred endless disorders in the nation.

THE Frisians, a tribe of the Germans, had never advanced beyond this wild and imperfect state of society; and the right of private revenge still remained among them unlimited and uncontrouled^A. But the other German nations, in the age of Tacitus, had made one step farther towards completing the political or civil union. Though it still continued to be an indispensable point of honour for every clan to revenge the death or injury of their fellow, the magistrate had acquired a right of interposing in the quarrel, and of accommodating the difference. He obliged the person maimed or injured, and the relations of one killed, to accept of a present from the aggressor and his relations^B, as a compensation for the injury^C, and to drop all farther prosecution of revenge. That the accommodating of one quarrel might not be the source of more, this present was fixed and certain, according to the rank of the person killed or injured, and was commonly paid in cattle, the chief property of those rude and uncultivated nations. A present of this kind gratified the revenge of the injured clan by the loss which the aggressor suffered: It satisfied their pride by the submission which it expressed: It diminished their regret for the loss or injury of a kinsman by their acquisition of new property: And thus general peace was for a moment restored to the society^D.

BUT

^A LL. Fris. tit. 2. apud Lindenbrog. p. 491.
Æthelb. § 23. LL. Ælf. § 27

^B LL. Called by the Saxons *mægbotia*.

^C Tacit. de morib. Germ. The author says, that the price of the composition was fixed; which must have been by the laws and the interposition of the magistrate.

BUT when the German nations had been settled some time in the provinces of the Roman empire, they made still a new step towards a more cultivated life, and their criminal justice gradually improved and refined itself. The magistrate, whose office it was to guard public peace and to suppress private animosities, conceived himself to be injured by every injury done to any of his people; and besides the compensation to the person who suffered, or to his clan, he thought himself entitled to exact a fine, called the *Fridwit*, as an atonement for the breach of peace, and as a reward for the pains which he had taken in accommodating the quarrel. When this idea, which is so natural, was once suggested, it was readily received both by magistrate and people. The numerous fines which were levied, augmented the profits of the king: And the people were sensible, that he would be more vigilant in interposing with his good offices, when he reaped such immediate advantage by them; and that injuries would be less frequent, when, besides compensation to the person injured, they were exposed to this additional penalty ^E.

THIS short abstract contains the history of the criminal jurisprudence of the northern nations for several centuries. The state of England in this particular, during the period of the Anglo-Saxons, may be judged of by the collection of antient laws, published by Lambard and Wilkins. The chief purport of these laws is not to prevent or suppress entirely private quarrels, which the legislators knew to be impossible, but only to regulate and moderate them. The laws of Alfred enjoin, that if any one knows, that his enemy or aggressor, after doing him an injury, resolves to keep within his own house *and his own lands* ^F, he shall not fight him, till he require compensation for the injury. If he be strong enough to besiege him in his house, he may do it for seven days without attacking him; and if the aggressor is willing, during that time, to surrender himself and his arms, his adver-

^E Besides paying money to the relations of the deceased and to the king, the murderer was also obliged to pay the master of a slave or vassal a sum as a compensation for his loss. This was called the *Manbote*. See Spel. Gloss in verb. *Fredum*, *Manbote*. ^F The addition of these last words in Italics appears necessary from what follows in the same law.

Appendix adversary may detain him thirty days, but is afterwards
 I. obliged to restore him safe to his kindred, *and be contented with the compensation.* If the criminal fly to the temple, that sanctuary must not be violated. Where the assailant has not force, sufficient to besiege the criminal in his house, he must apply to the alderman for assistance; and if the alderman refuses aid, the assailant must have recourse to the king: And he is not allowed to assault the house, till after a refusal of assistance from this supreme magistrate. If any one meets with his enemy, and is ignorant that he was resolved to keep within his own lands, he must, before he attacks him, require him to surrender himself a prisoner, and deliver up his arms; in which case he may detain him thirty days: But if he refuses to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A slave may fight in his master's quarrel: A father may fight in his son's with any one, except with his master^G.

It was enacted by king Ina, that no man should take revenge of an injury till he had first demanded compensation, and had been refused it^B.

KING Edmond, in the preamble to his laws, mentions the general dissatisfaction, occasioned by the multiplicity of private feuds and battles; and he establishes several expedients to remedy this grievance. He ordains, that if any one murders another, he may, with the assistance of his kindred, pay within a twelvemonth the fine of his crime; and if they abandon him, he shall alone sustain the deadly feud or quarrel with the kindred of the murdered person: His own kindred are free from the feud, but on condition that they neither converse with the criminal, nor supply him with meat or other necessities: If any of them, after renouncing him, receive him into their house, or give him assistance, they are finable to the king, and are involved in the feud. If the kindred of the murdered person take revenge of any but the criminal himself, *after he is abandoned by his kindred*, all their property is forfeited, and they are declared to be enemies to the king and all his friends^C. It is also ordained, that the fine for murder shall never be remitted by the king^D, and that no criminal shall be killed who flies to the church,
 or

^G LL. Ælfr. §. 28. Wilkins, p. 43. ^B LL. Inz, § 9.
^C LL. Edm. § 1. Wilkins, p. 73. ^D LL. Edm. § 3.

or any of the king's towns ^E; and the king himself declares, that his house shall give no protection to murderers, till they have satisfied the church by their penance, and the kindred of the deceased by making compensation ^F. There follows the method appointed for transacting this composition ^G.

THESE attempts of Edmond to contract and diminish the feuds, were contrary to the antient spirit of the northern barbarians, and were an advance towards a more regular administration of justice. By the Salic law, any man might, by a public declaration, exempt himself from his family quarrels: But then he was considered by the law as no longer belonging to the family; and he was deprived of all right of succession, as a punishment of his cowardice ^H.

THE price of the king's head, or his weregild, as it was then called, was by law 30,000 thrimfas, a species of coin whose value is uncertain. The price of the prince's head was 15,000 thrimfas; that of a bishop's or alderman's 8000; a sheriff's 4000; a thane's or clergyman's 2000; a ceorle's 266. These prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law, the price of a ceorle's head was 200 shillings; that of a thane's six times as much; that of a king's six times more ^I. By the laws of Kent, the price of the archbishop's head was higher than that of the king's ^K. Such respect was then paid to the ecclesiastics! It must be understood, that where a person was unable to pay the fine, he was put out of the protection of the law, and the kindred of the deceased had liberty to punish him as they thought proper.

SOME antiquarians ^L have thought, that these compensations were only given for man-slaughter, not for wilful murder: But no such distinction appears in the laws; and it is contradicted by the practice of all the other barbarous nations ^M, by that of the antient Germans ^N, and by that curious monument of Saxon antiquity, preserved by Hickes. There is indeed a law of Alfred, making wilful

^E LL. Edm. § 2. ^F LL. Edm. § 4. ^G LL. Edm. § 7. ^H Tit 63. ^I Wilkins, p. 71, 72. ^K LL. Elthredi, apud Wilkins, p. 110. ^L Tyrrel introduct. vol. i. p. 126. Carte, vol. i. p. 366. ^M Lindenbrogius, passim. ^N Tac. de mor. Germ.

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I.

wilful murder capital^o; but this seems only to have been an attempt of that great legislator for establishing a better police in the kingdom, and to have remained without execution. By the laws of the same prince, a conspiracy against the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine^r.

THE price of all kinds of wounds was likewise fixed by the Saxon laws: A wound of an inch long under the hair was paid with one shilling: One of a like size on the face, two shillings: Thirty shillings for the loss of an ear; and so forth^q. There seems not to have been any difference made, according to the dignity of the person. By Ethelbert's laws, any one who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife^r.

THESE institutions are not peculiar to the antient Germans. They seem to be the necessary progress of criminal jurisprudence among every free people, where the will of the sovereign is not implicitly obeyed. We find them among the antient Greeks during the time of the Trojan war. Compositions for murder are mentioned in Nestor's speech to Achilles in the ninth Iliad, and are called *αἵματος*. The Irish, who never had any connection with the German nations, adopted the same practice till very lately: and the price of a man's head was called among them *eric*; as we learn from Sir John Davis. The same custom seems also to have prevailed among the Jews^s.

THEFT and robbery were very frequent among the Anglo-Saxons. To impose some check upon these crimes, it was ordained that no man should sell or buy any thing above twenty pence value, except in open market^t; and every bargain of sale must be executed before witnesses^u. Gangs of robbers much disturbed the peace of the country; and the law determined, that a tribe of banditti, consisting of between seven and thirty-five persons,

^o LL. Ælf. § 12. Wilkins, p. 29. It is probable, that by wilful murder Alfred means a treacherous murder, committed by one who has no declared feud with another.

^p LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35. ^q LL. Ælf. § 40. See also LL. Ethelb. § 34, &c. ^r LL. Ethelb. § 32.

^s Exod. cap. xxi. 29, 30.

^t LL. Æthelst. §. 12.

^u LL. Æthelst. § 10, 12. LL. Edg. apud Wilkins, p. 80, LL. Ethelredi, § 4. apud Wilkins, p. 103. Hloth. & Eadm. § 16. LL. Canut. § 22.

sons, was to be called a *turma*, or troop: Any greater company was denominated an army ^F. The punishments for this crime were various, but none of them capital ^G. If any man could track his stolen cattle into another's ground, the latter was obliged to shew the tracks out of it, or pay their value ^H.

TREASON and rebellion, to whatever excess they were carried, were not then capital, but might be redeemed by a sum of money ^I. The legislators, knowing it impossible to prevent all disorders, only imposed a higher fine on breaches of the peace committed in the king's court, or before an alderman or bishop. An alehouse too seems to have been considered as a privileged place; and any quarrels that arose there were more severely punished than elsewhere ^K.

If the punishments of crimes among the Anglo-Saxons appear singular, the proofs were no less so: and were also the natural result of the situation of these people. Whatever we may imagine concerning the usual truth and sincerity of men, who live in a rude and barbarous state, there is much more falsehood, and even perjury, among them than among civilized nations; and virtue, which is nothing but a more enlarged and more cultivated reason, never flourishes to any degree, nor is founded on steady principles of honour, except where a good education becomes general; and men are taught the pernicious consequences of vice, treachery, and immorality. Even superstition, though more prevalent among ignorant nations, is but a poor supply for the defects of knowledge and education; and our European ancestors, who employed every moment the expedient of swearing on extraordinary crosses and reliques, were less honourable in all engagements than their posterity, who from experience have omitted these ineffectual securities. This general proneness to perjury was much increased by the usual want of discernment in judges, who could not discuss an intricate evidence, and were obliged to number, not

VOL. I. O weigh,

^F LL. Inæ, § 12. ^G LL. Inæ, § 37. ^H LL. Æthelst.
§ 2. Wilkins, p. 63. ^I LL. Ethelredi, apud Wilkins, p.
110. LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35. ^K LL. Hloth. &
Eadm. § 12, 13. LL. Ethelr. apud Wilkins, p. 117.

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weigh, the testimony of the witnesses^L. Hence the ridiculous practice of obliging men to bring compurgators, who, as they did not pretend to know any thing of the fact, expressed upon oath that they believed the person spoke true; and these compurgators, were in some cases multiplied to the number of three hundred^M. The practice also of single combat was employed by most nations on the continent as a remedy against false evidence^N; and tho' it was frequently dropped, from the opposition of the clergy, it was continually revived, from experience of the falsehood attending the testimony of witnesses^O. It became at last a species of jurisprudence; and the cases were determined by law, in which the party might challenge his adversary, or the witnesses, or the judge himself^P: And though these customs were absurd, they were rather an improvement on the methods of trial, which had formerly been practised among these barbarous nations, and which still prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons.

WHEN any controversy about a fact became too intricate for these ignorant judges to unravel, they had recourse to what they called the judgment of God, that is, to fortune; and their methods for consulting this oracle were various. One of them was the decision by the *cross*; and it was practised in this manner. When a person was accused of any crime, he first cleared himself by oath, attended by eleven compurgators: He next took two pieces of wood, one of which was marked with the sign of the cross; and wrapping both up in wool, he placed them on the altar, or on some celebrated relique. After solemn prayers for the success of the experiment, a priest, or in his stead some unexperienced youth, took up one of the pieces of wood, and if he happened upon that marked with the figure of the cross, the person was pronounced

^L Sometimes the laws fixed easy general rules for weighing the credibility of witnesses. A man whose life was estimated at 120 shillings counterbalanced six ceorles, each of whose lives was valued at twenty shillings, and his oath was esteemed equivalent to that of all the six. See Wilkins, p. 72.

^M Præf. Nicol ad Wilkins, p. 11. ^N LL. Burgund. cap.

45. LL. Lomb. lib. 2. tit. 55. cap. 34. ^O LL. Longob.

lib. 2. tit. 55. cap. 23. apud Lindenb. p. 661. ^P See Desfontaines and Beaumanoir.

nounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty ^Q. This practice, as it arose from superstition, was abolished by it in France. The emperor, Lewis the Debonnaire, prohibited that method of trial, not because it was uncertain, but lest that sacred figure, says he, of the cross should be prostituted in common disputes and controversies ^R.

THE ordeal was another established method of trial among the Anglo-Saxons. It was practised either by boiling water or red-hot iron. The water or iron was consecrated by many prayers, masses, fastings, and exorcisms ^S; after which, the person accused either took up a stone sunk into the water ^T to a certain depth, or carried the iron a certain distance; and his hand being wrapped up, and the covering sealed for three days, if there appeared on examining it no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwise, guilty ^R. The trial by cold water was different: The person was thrown into consecrated water; if he swam, he was guilty; if he sunk, innocent ^X. It is difficult for us to conceive, how any innocent person could ever escape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another usage admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to escape, who had confidence enough to try it. A consecrated cake, called a corned, was produced; which if the person could swallow and digest, he was pronounced innocent ^Y.

THE feudal law, if it had place at all among the Anglo-Saxons, which is doubtful, certainly was not extended over all the landed property, and was not attended with those consequences of homage, reliefs ^Z, wardship, marriage, and other burthens, which were inseparable from it in the kingdoms of the continent. As the Saxons expelled or destroyed entirely the ancient Britains, they

^Q LL. Frison. tit. 34. apud Lindenbrogium, p. 496. ^R Du Cange in verb. Crux. ^S Spelm. in verb. Ordeal. Parker, p. 155. Lindenbrog. p. 1299. ^T LL. Inæ, § 77. ^U Sometimes the person accused walked barefoot over red hot iron. ^X Spelman in verb. Ordealium. ^Y Spelman in verb. Corned. Parker, p. 156. Text. Roffens. p. 33. ^Z On the death of an alderman, a greater or lesser thane, there was a payment made to the king of his best arms; and this was called his heriot: But this was not of the nature of a relief. See Spelm. of tenures, p. 32. The value of this heriot was fixed by Canute's laws, § 69.

Appendix
II.

planted themselves in this island on the same footing with their ancestors in Germany, and found no occasion for the feudal institutions, which were calculated to maintain a kind of standing army, always in readiness to suppress any insurrection of the conquered people. The trouble and expence of defending the state in England lay equally upon all the land; and it was usual for every five hides to equip a man for the service. The *trinoda necessitas*, as it was called, or the burthen of military expeditions, of repairing highways, and of building and supporting bridges, was inseparable from landed property, even though it belonged to the church or monasteries, unless exempted by a particular charter.^A The cottiers or husbandmen were provided with arms, and were obliged to take their turn in military duty.^B There were computed to be 24,600 hides in England^C; consequently the ordinary military force of the kingdom consisted of 48,720 men; though, no doubt, on extraordinary occasions, a greater power might be assembled. The king and nobility had some military tenants, who were called *Sithcun-men*.^D And there were some lands annexed to the office of alderman, and to other offices; but these probably were not of great extent, and were possessed only during pleasure, as in the commencement of the feudal law in other countries of Europe.

Public revenue.

THE revenue of the king seems to have consisted chiefly in his demesnes, which were large; and in the tolls and imposts which he probably levied at discretion on the boroughs and sea-ports, that lay within his demesnes. He could not alienate any part of his land, even to religious uses, without the consent of the states.^E Danegelt was a land-tax of a shilling a hyde, imposed by the states^F, either for payment of the sums exacted by the Danes, or for putting the kingdom in a posture of defence against these invaders.^G

Value of money.

THE Saxon pounds, as likewise those coined for some centuries after the conquest, were three times the weight

^A Bracton de Acq. rer. domin. lib. 2. cap. 16. See more fully Spelman of feuds and tenures, and Craigius de jure feud. lib. 1. diag. 7. ^B Spelm. Conc. vol. 1. p. 256. ^C Ina. § 51. ^D Spelm. of feuds and tenures, p. 17. ^E Spelm. Conc. vol. 1. p. 195. ^F Spelm. Conc. vol. 1. p. 340. ^G Chron. Sax. p. 128. ^H LL. Edw. Con. § 12.

of our present money: There were forty-eight shillings in the pound, and five pence in a shilling¹; and consequently a Saxon shilling was a fifth larger than ours, and a Saxon penny three times as large². As to the value of money in those times, compared to the necessities of life there are some, though not very certain means of computation. A sheep by the laws of Athelstan was estimated at a shilling; that is, fifteen pence of our money. The fleece was two-fifths of the value of the whole sheep, and much above its present estimation; of which the reason probably was, that the Saxons, like the antients, were little acquainted with any other cloathing but that made of wool. Silk and cotton were quite unknown: Linen was not much used. An ox was computed at six times the value of a sheep; a cow at four³. If we suppose that the cattle in that age, from the defects of husbandry, were not so large as they are at present in England, we may compute that money was then near ten times of greater value. A horse was valued at about thirty-six shillings of our money, or thirty Saxon shillings⁴; a mare a third less. A man at three pounds⁵. The board wages of a child the first year was eight shillings, a cow's pasture in summer, and an ox's in winter⁶. William of Malmesbury mentions it as a high price that William Rufus gave fifteen marks for a horse, or about thirty pounds of our present money⁷. Between the years 900 and 1000, Ednoth bought a hyde of land for about 118 shillings⁸. This was a little more than a shilling an acre, which indeed appears to have been the usual price, as we may learn from other accounts⁹. A palfrey was sold for twelve shillings about the year 966¹⁰. The value of an ox in king Ethelred's time was between seven and eight shillings; a cow about six shillings¹¹. Gervas of Tilbury says, that in Henry the first's time, bread during a day for a hundred men was rated at three shillings, or a shilling of that age; for it is thought that soon after the conquest a pound sterling was divided into twenty shillings: A sheep was rated at a shilling, and so of other things.

¹ LL. Ælf. § 40. ² Fleetwood's Chron. Pretiosum, p. 27, 28, &c. ³ LL. Inz. § 69. ⁴ Wilkins, p. 66. ⁵ Ibid. ⁶ LL. Inz. § 389. ⁷ Q. P. 121. ⁸ Hist. Ramef. p. 415. ⁹ Hist. Elensf. p. 473. ¹⁰ Hist. Elensf. p. 471. ¹¹ Wilkins, p. 126.

Appendix things in proportion. In Athelstan's time a ram was valued at a shilling, or four-pence Saxon ^x. The tenants of Shireburn were obliged, at their choice, to pay either six-pence or four hens ^y. About 1232, the abbot of St. Albans, going on a journey, hired seven handsome stout horses; and agreed, if any of them died on the road, to pay the owner 30 shillings a-piece of our present money ^z. It is to be remarked, that in all antient times, corn, being a species of manufactory, bore always a higher price, compared to cattle, than it does in our times ^a. The Saxon Chronicle tells us ^b, that in the reign of Edward the Confessor there was the most terrible famine ever known; in so much that a quarter of wheat rose to sixty pennies, or about fifteen shillings of our present money. Consequently it was as dear as if it now cost seven pounds, ten shillings sterling. This much exceeds the great famine in the end of the reign of queen Elizabeth; when a quarter of wheat was sold for four pounds. Money in this last period was nearly of the same value as in our time. These enormous famines are a certain proof of bad husbandry.

On the whole, there are three things to be considered, wherever a sum of money is mentioned in antient times. First, the change of denomination, by which a pound has been reduced to the third part of its antient weight in silver. Secondly, the change in value by the greater plenty of money, which has reduced the same weight of silver to ten times less value, compared to commodities; and consequently a pound sterling to the thirtieth part of the antient value. Thirdly, the fewer people and less industry, which were then to be found in every European kingdom. This circumstance made even the thirtieth part of the sum more difficult to levy, and caused any sum to have more than thirty times more weight and influence both abroad and at home, than in our times; in the same manner that a sum, an hundred thousand pounds for instance, is at present more difficult to levy in a small state, such as Bavaria, and can operate greater effects on such a small community, than on England. This last difference is not easy to be calculated: But allowing, that
England

^x Wilkins, p. 56.

^y Monast. Anglic. vol. ii. p. 528.

^z Hist. Paris.

^a Fleetwood, p. 83, 94, 96, 98.

^b P.

England has now above five times more industry, and three times more people than it had at the conquest and for some reigns after it, we are, upon that supposition, to conceive, taking all circumstances together, every sum of money mentioned by historians, as if it were multiplied more than an hundred fold above a sum of the same denomination at present.

IN the Saxon times, land was divided equally among all the male-children of the deceased, according to the custom of Gavelkind. Entails were sometimes practised in those times^c. Lands were chiefly of two kinds, *book-land*, or land held by book or charter, which were regarded as full property, and descended to the heirs of the possessor; and *folkland*, or the land held by the ceorles and common people, who were removeable at pleasure, and were indeed only tenants during the will of their lords.

THE first attempt, which we find in England to separate the ecclesiastical from the civil jurisdiction, was that law of Edgar, by which all disputes among the clergy were ordered to be carried before the bishop^d. The penances were then very severe; but as a man could buy them off by money, or might substitute others to perform them, they lay very easy upon the rich^e.

WITH regard to the manners of the Anglo-Saxons we can say little, but that they were in general a rude, uncultivated people, ignorant of letters, unskilled in the mechanical arts, untamed to submission under law and government, addicted to intemperance, riot and disorder. Their best quality was their military courage, which was not supported by discipline or conduct. Their want of fidelity to the prince, or to any trust reposed in them, appears strongly in the history of their latter period; and their want of humanity in all their history. Even the Norman historians, notwithstanding the low state of the arts in their own country, speak of them as barbarians, when they mention the invasion made upon them by the duke of Normandy. The conquest put the people in a situation of receiving slowly from abroad the rudiments of science and cultivation, and of correcting their rough and licentious manners.

C H A P.

^c LL. Ek. §. 37. apud Wilkins, p. 43. ^d Wilkins, p. 83. ^e Wilkins, p. 96, 97. Spel. Conc. p. 473.

C H A P. IV.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Consequences of the battle of Hastings—Submission of the English—Settlement of the government—King's return to Normandy—Discontents of the English—Their insurrections—Rigors of the Norman government—New insurrections—New rigors of the government—Introduction of the feudal law—Innovation in ecclesiastical government—Insurrection of the Norman barons—Dispute about investitures—Revolt of prince Robert—Doomsday-book—The New forest—War with France—Death—and character of William the Conqueror.

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1066.

Consequences of the battle of Hastings.

NOTHING could exceed the consternation which seized the English, when they received intelligence of the unfortunate battle of Hastings, the death of their king, the slaughter of their principal nobility, and of their bravest warriors, and the rout and dispersion of the remainder. But tho' the loss, which they had sustained in that fatal action, was considerable, it might easily have been repaired by a great nation; where the people were generally armed, and where there resided so many powerful noblemen in every province, who could have assembled their retainers, and have obliged the duke of Normandy to divide his army, and probably to waste it in a multitude of actions and rencounters. It was thus, that the kingdom had formerly resisted, for many years, its invaders, and had been gradually subdued, by the continued efforts of the Romans, Saxons, and Danes; and equal difficulties might have been apprehended by William in this bold and hazardous enterprize. But there were several vices in the Anglo-Saxon constitution which rendered it difficult for the English to defend their liberties in so critical an emergency. The people had in a great measure lost all national pride and spirit, by their recent and long subjection to the Danes; and as Canute had, in the course of his administration, much abated the rigors of conquest, and had governed them equitably by their own laws, they regarded with the less terror the ignominy of a foreign yoke, and deemed the inconveniences of submission

less formidable than those of bloodshed, war, and resistance. Their attachment also to the antient royal family had been much weakened by their habitude of submission to the Danish princes, and by their late election of Harold, or their acquiescence in his usurpation. And as they had long been accustomed to regard Edgar Atheling the only heir of the Saxon line, as unfit to govern them even in times of order and tranquillity; they could entertain small hopes of his being able to repair such great losses as they had sustained, or to withstand the victorious arms of the duke of Normandy.

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1066.

THAT they might not, however, be altogether wanting to themselves in this extreme necessity, the English took some steps towards adjusting their disjointed government, and uniting themselves against the common enemy. The two potent earls, Edwin and Morcar, who had fled to London with the remains of the broken army, took the lead on this occasion; and in concert with Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, a man possessed of great authority, and of ample revenues, proclaimed Edgar king, and endeavoured to put the people in a posture of defence, and encourage them to resist the Normans^D. But the terror of the late defeat, and the near neighbourhood of the invaders, encreased the confusion, inseparable from great revolutions; and every resolution proposed was hasty, fluctuating, variable; disconcerted by fear or faction; ill planned, and worse executed.

WILLIAM, that his enemies might not have leisure to recover their consternation or unite their councils, immediately put himself in motion after his victory, and resolved to prosecute an enterprize, which nothing but celerity and vigor could render finally successful. His first attempt was against Romney, whose inhabitants he severely punished on account of their cruel treatment of some Norman seamen and soldiers, who had been carried thither by stress of weather or by a mistake in their course^E: And foreseeing that his conquest of England might still be attended with many difficulties and with much opposition, he thought it necessary, before he should advance farther into the country, to make himself master of Dover, which would both secure him a retreat

in

^D Gul. Picav. p. 205. Order. Vitalis, p. 504. Hoveden, p. 449. Knighton, p. 344. ^E Gul. Picav. p. 204.

CHAP. in case of adverse fortune, and afford him a safe landing place for such supplies as might be requisite for assisting him to push his advantages. The terror, diffused by his victory at Hastings, was so great, that the garrison of Dover, though numerous and well provided of every thing, immediately capitulated; and as the Normans, rushing in to take possession of the town, hastily set fire to some of the houses, William, who was desirous to conciliate the minds of the English by an appearance of lenity and justice, made reparation to the inhabitants for their losses^f.

IV.
1066.

THE Norman army, being much distressed with a dysentery, was obliged to remain here eight days; and the duke on their recovery; advanced with quick marches towards London, and by his approach encreased the confusions, which were already so prevalent in the English councils. The ecclesiastics in particular, whose influence was great over the people, began to declare in his favour; and as most of the bishops and dignified clergymen were even then Frenchmen or Normans, the pope's bull, by which his enterprize was avowed and consecrated, was now openly insisted on as a reason for general submission. The superior learning of those prelates, which, during the Confessor's reign, had raised them above the ignorant Saxons, made their opinions be received with implicit faith; and a young prince, like Edgar, whose capacity was deemed so mean, was but ill qualified to resist the impression, which they made on the minds of the people. A repulse, which a body of Londoners received from five hundred Norman horse, renewed in the city the terror of the great defeat at Hastings^g; the easy submission of all the inhabitants of Kent was an additional discouragement to them^h; the burning of Southwark before their eyes made them dread a like fate to their own city; and no man any longer entertained thoughts but of immediate safety and of self-preservation. Even the earls, Edwin and Morcar, in despair of making effectual resistance, retired with their troops to their own provincesⁱ; and the people thenceforth disposed themselves unani-

^f Ibid. ^g Gul. Pictav. p. 205. Order. Vital. p. 503.

^h Gul. Pictav. p. 205. It is pretended, that the Kentishmen capitulated for the preservation of their privileges. See Thom Spot, apud Wilkins Gloss. in verb. Bocland. ⁱ Hoveden, p. 449.

unanimously to yield to the victor. As soon as William passed the Thames at Wallingford, and reached Berkhamstead, Stigand, the primate, made submission to him; and before the prince came within sight of the city, all the chief nobility, and Edgar Atheling himself, the new elected king, came into his camp, and declared their intention of yielding to his authority^K. They requested him to accept of their crown, which they now considered as vacant; and declared to him, that, as they had always been ruled by regal power, they desired to follow, in this particular, the example of their ancestors, and knew of no one more worthy than himself to hold the reins of government^L.

1066.
Submission
of the
English.

THOUGH this was the great object, to which the duke's enterprize tended, he seemed to deliberate on the offer; and being desirous, at first, of preserving the appearance of a legal administration, he wished to obtain a more express and formal consent both of his own army and of the English nation^M: But Aimar of Aquitain, a man equally respected for his valour in the field, and for his prudence in council, remonstrating with him on the danger of delay in so critical a conjuncture, he laid aside all farther scruples, and accepted of the crown which was proffered him. Orders were immediately issued to prepare every thing for the ceremony of his coronation; but as he was yet afraid to place entire confidence in the Londoners, who were numerous and warlike, he meanwhile commanded fortresses to be erected in order to curb the inhabitants, and to secure his person and government^N.

STIGAND was not much in the duke's favour, both because he had intruded into the see on the expulsion of Robert, the Norman, and because he possessed such influence and authority over the English^O as might be dangerous to a new established monarch. William, therefore, pretending that the primate had obtained his pall in an irregular manner from pope Benedict IX. who was himself

^K Hoveden, p. 450. Flor. Wigorn. p. 634. ^L Gul.
Pict. p. 205. Ord. Vital. p. 503. ^M Gul. Pictav. p. 205.
^N Ibid. ^O Eadmer, p. 6.

CH A P. himself an usurper, refused to be consecrated by him^r, and conferred that honour on Aldred, archbishop of York. Westminster abbey was the place appointed for that magnificent ceremony; the most considerable of the nobility, both English and Norman, attended the duke on this occasion; Aldred in a short speech asked the former, whether they agreed to accept of William as their king; the bishop of Constance put the same question to the latter; and both being answered with acclamations, Aldred administered to the duke the usual coronation oath, by which he bound himself to protect the church, to administer justice, and, to repress violence; and he then anointed him, and put the crown upon his head^r. There appeared nothing but joy in the countenance of the spectators: But in that very moment, there burst forth the strongest symptoms of the jealousy and animosity which prevailed between the nations, and which continually increased during the reign of this prince. The Norman soldiers, who were placed without in order to guard the church, hearing the shouts within, fancied that the English were committing violence on their duke; and they immediately assaulted the populace, and set fire to the neighbouring houses. The alarm was conveyed to the nobility who surrounded the prince; both English and Normans, full of apprehensions, rushed out to secure themselves from the present danger; and it was with difficulty, that William himself was able to appease the tumult^s.

1066.
26th Dec.

1067.
Settlement
of the go-
vernment.

THE king, thus possessed of the throne by a pretended destination of king Edward, and by an irregular election of the people, but still more by force of arms, retired from London to Berking in Essex; and there received the submissions of all the nobility, who had not attended his coronation. Edric, surnamed the Forester, grand-nephew to that Edric, so noted for his repeated acts of perfidy during the reigns of Ethelred and Edmund; earl

Gul. Pictav. p. 206. Ingulf, p. 69. Malmesb. p. 102. Hoveden, p. 450. Matth. West. p. 245. Flor. Wig. 635. M. Paris, p. 4. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 248. Alur. Beverl. p. 126. Order. Vitalis, p. 503. Malmesbury, p. 271, says, that he also promised to govern the Normans and English by equal laws; and this addition to the usual oath seems not improbable, considering the circumstances of the times. Gul. Pict. p. 206. Order. Vitalis, p. 503.

earl Coxo, a man famous for bravery; even Edwin and Morcar, earls of Mercia and Northumberland; with the other principal noblemen of England, came and swore fealty to him; were received into favour; and were confirmed in the possession of their estates and dignities^T. Every thing bore the appearance of peace and tranquillity; and William had no other occupation than to give contentment to the foreigners who had helped him to the throne, and to his new subjects, who had so readily submitted to him.

CHAP.
IV.
1067

HE had got possession of the treasure of Harold, which was considerable; and being also supplied with rich presents from the opulent men in all parts of England, who were solicitous to gain the favour of their new sovereign, he distributed great sums among his troops, and by this liberality gave them hopes of obtaining at length those more durable establishments, which they had expected from his enterprize^U. The ecclesiastics, both at home and abroad, had much forwarded his success; and he failed not, in return, to express his gratitude and devotion in the manner which was most acceptable to them: He sent Harold's standard to the pope, accompanied with many valuable presents: All the considerable monasteries and churches in France, where prayers had been put up for his success, now tasted of his bounty^X: The English monks found him well disposed to favour their order; and he built a new convent near Hastings, which he called *Battle-Abby*, and which, on pretence of supporting monks to pray for his own soul, and that of Harold, served as a perpetual memorial of his victory^Y.

HE introduced into England that strict execution of justice, for which his administration had been so celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution, every disorder or oppression met with the most rigorous punishment^Z. His own army in particular was governed with severe discipline; and notwithstanding the

^T Gul. Pictav. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506. ^U Gul. Pict. p. 206. ^X Gul. Pict. p. 206. ^Y Gul. Gemet. p. 288. Chron. Sax. p. 189. M. West. p. 226. M. Paris, p. 90. Diceto, p. 492. This convent was freed by him from all episcopal jurisdiction. Monast. Ang. tom. 1. p. 311, 312.

^Z Gul. Pict. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506.

CHAP. IV. ^{1067.} In silence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as possible to the jealousy of the vanquished ^A. The king appeared solicitous to unite in an amicable manner the Normans and the English, by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new subjects who approached his person were received with affability and regard. No signs of suspicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the antient royal family, whom he confirmed in the honours of earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the highest kindness, as nephew to the Confessor, his great friend and benefactor ^B. Though he confiscated the estates of Harold, and of those who had fought in the battle of Hastings on the side of that prince, whom he represented as an usurper, he seemed willing to admit of every plausible excuse for past opposition to his pretensions ^C, and he received many into favour, who had carried arms against him. He confirmed the liberties and immunities of London and the other cities of England; and appeared desirous of replacing every thing on antient establishments. In his whole administration, he bore the semblance of the lawful prince, not of the conqueror ^D; and the English began to flatter themselves, that they had changed, not the form of their government, but only the succession of their sovereigns, a matter which gave them small concern. The better to reconcile his new subjects to his authority, he made a progress through some parts of England; and besides a splendid court and majestic presence, which overawed the people, already struck with his military fame, the appearance of his clemency and justice gained the approbation of the wise, who were attentive to the first steps of their new sovereign ^E.

BUT amidst this confidence and friendship, which he expressed for the English, the king took care to place all real power in the hands of his Normans, and still to keep possession of the sword, to which, he was sensible, he had owed his advancement to sovereign authority. He disarmed the city of London and other places, which appeared most warlike and populous ^F; and building fortresses

^A Gul. Pic. p. 207. Order. Vital. p. 505, 506. ^B Gul. Pic. p. 208.
^C Gul. Pic. p. 207. Order. Vital. p. 506. ^D Brompton, p. 962. ^E Gul. Pic. p. 208.
^F Baker, p. 24.

treffes and citadels in that capital, as well as in Winchester, Hereford, and the cities best situated for commanding the kingdom, he quartered Norman soldiers in all of them, and left no where any power able to resist or oppose him^G. He bestowed the forfeited estates on the most powerful of his captains, and established funds for the payment of his soldiers^H. And thus, while his civil administration carried the face of a legal magistrate, his military institutions were those of a master and tyrant; at least of one, who reserved to himself; whenever he pleased, the power of assuming that character.

By this mixture, however, of vigour and lenity, he had so pacified the minds of the English, that he thought he might safely revisit his native country, and enjoy the triumph and congratulation of his antient subjects. He left the administration in the hands of his uterine brother, Odo, bishop of Baieux, and of William Fitz Osbern^D; and that their authority might be exposed to less danger, he carried over with him all the most considerable nobility of England, who both served to grace his court by their presence and magnificent retinues, and were detained as hostages for the fidelity of the nation^E. Among these, were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the son of the famous and brave earl Siward, with others, eminent for the greatness of their fortunes and families, or for their ecclesiastical and civil dignities^F. He was visited at the abbey of Fescamp, where he resided during some time, by Rodulph, uncle to the French king^G, and by many powerful princes and nobles, who, having contributed to his enterprize, were desirous of participating in the joy and advantages of its success. His English courtiers, willing to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign, endeavoured to outshine each other in equipages and entertainments; and made a display of riches, which struck the foreigners with astonishment. William of Poitiers, a Norman

King's return to Normandy.

March.

^G Gul. Pi&t. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506. M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4.

^H Gul. Pi&t. p. 208. Flor. Wigorn. p. 635. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197. Alur. Beverl. p. 125.

^E Order. Vital. p. 506. ^F Gul. Pi&t. p. 209. Order. Vital. p. 506. Hoveden, p. 450. Flor. Wigorn. p. 635.

Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 46. Knyghton, p. 2343.

^G Gul. Pi&t. p. 211. Order. Vital. p. 506.

CHAP. Norman historian^H, who was present, speaks with admiration of the beauty of their persons, the size and workmanship of their silver plate, the costliness of their embroideries, an art in which the English then excelled; and he expresses himself in such terms, as would much exalt our idea of the opulence and cultivation of the people^L. But though every thing bore the face of joy and festivity, and William himself treated his new courtiers with great appearance of kindness, it was impossible to prevent altogether the insolence of the Normans; and the English nobles received little pleasure from those entertainments, where they considered themselves as led in triumph by their ostentatious conqueror.

Discontents of the English.

AFFAIRS in England took still a worse turn during the absence of the sovereign. Discontents and complaints multiplied every where; secret conspiracies were entered into against the government; hostilities were already begun in many places; and every thing seemed to menace a revolution as rapid as that which had placed William on the throne. The historian above-mentioned, who is a panegyrist of his master, throws the blame entirely on the fickle and mutinous disposition of the English, and highly celebrates the justice and lenity of Odo's and Fitz Osbern's administration^K. But other historians, with more probability, impute the cause chiefly to the Normans, who, despising a people that had so easily submitted to the yoke, envying their riches, and grudging the restraints imposed upon their own rapine, were desirous of provoking them to a rebellion, by which they hoped to acquire new confiscations and forfeitures, and to satisfy those unbounded hopes, which they had formed in entering on this enterprize^L.

It is evident, that the chief reason of this alteration in the sentiments of the English, must be ascribed to the departure of William, who was alone capable of curbing the violence of his captains, and of overawing the mutinies

^H P. 211, 212. ^L As the historian chiefly insists on the silver plate, his panegyrics on the English magnificence shows only how incompetent a judge he was of the matter. Silver was then of ten times the value, and was more than twenty times more rare than at present; and consequently, of all species of luxury, plate must have been the rarest.

^K P. 212.

^L Order. Vital. p. 507.

mutinies of the people. Nothing appears more strange, than that this prince, in less than three months after the conquest of a great, warlike, and turbulent nation, should absent himself, in order to revisit his own country, which remained in profound tranquillity, and was not menaced by any of its neighbours; and should leave so long his jealous subjects at the mercy of an insolent and licentious army. Were we not assured of the solidity of his genius, and the good sense displayed in all other circumstances of his conduct, we might ascribe this measure to a vain ostentation, which rendered him impatient to display his pomp and magnificence among his antient courtiers. It is therefore more natural to believe, that in so extraordinary a step, he was guided by a concealed policy; and that though he had thought proper at first to allure the people to submission by the semblance of a legal administration, he found, that he could neither satisfy his rapacious captains, nor secure his unstable government, without exerting farther the rights of conquest, and seizing the possessions of the English. In order to give a pretence for this violence, he endeavoured, without, discovering his intentions, to provoke and allure them into insurrections, which, he thought, could never prove dangerous, while he detained all the principal nobility in Normandy, while a great and victorious army was quartered in England, and while he himself was so near to suppress any tumult or rebellion. But as no antient writer has ascribed this tyrannical purpose to William, it scarce seems allowable, from conjecture alone, to throw such an imputation upon him.

BUT whether we are to account for that measure from the king's vanity or from his policy, it was the immediate cause of all the calamities which the English endured during this and the subsequent reigns, and gave rise to those mutual jealousies and animosities between them and the Normans, which were never appeased, till a long tract of time had gradually united the two nations, and made them one people. The inhabitants of Kent, who had first submitted to the Conqueror, were the first who attempted to throw off the yoke; and in confederacy with Eustace, count of Bologne, who had also been disgusted by the Normans, made an attempt, though without suc-

CHAP. cxi on the garrison of Dover^M. Edric, the Forester, whose possessions lay on the banks of the Severne, being provoked at the depredations of some Norman captains in his neighbourhood, formed an alliance with Blethyn and Rowallan, two Welsh princes; and endeavoured, with their assistance, to repel force by force^N. But though these open hostilities were not very considerable, the dissatisfaction was general among the English, who had become sensible, though too late, of their defenceless condition, and began already to experience those insults and injuries, which a nation must always expect, that allows itself to be reduced to that despicable situation. A secret conspiracy was entered into to perpetrate in one day a general assassination of the Normans, like that which had been formerly executed upon the Danes^O; and the quarrel was become so general and national, that the vassal of earl Coxo, having desired him to head them in an insurrection, and finding him resolute in maintaining his fidelity to William, put him to death as a traitor to his country^P.

Decem-
ber 6.

THE king, informed of these dangerous discontents, hastened over to England; and by his presence, and the vigorous measures which he pursued, disconcerted all the schemes of the conspirators. Such of them as had been more violent in their mutiny betrayed their guilt, by flying or concealing themselves; and the confiscation of their estates, while it increased the number of malcontents, both enabled William to gratify farther the rapacity of his Norman captains, and gave them the prospect of new forfeitures and attainders^Q. The king began to regard all his English subjects as inveterate and irreclaimable enemies; and thenceforth either embraced, or was more fully confirmed in his resolution, of seizing their possessions, and of reducing them to the most abject slavery. Though the natural violence and severity of his temper made him incapable of feeling any scruples in the execution of this tyrannical purpose, he had art enough to conceal his intention, and to preserve still some appearance

^M Gul. Gemet. p. 289. Order. Vital. p. 508. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 245.
^N Hoveden, p. 450. M West. p. 236. Sim. Dunelm p. 197.
^O Gul. Gemet. p. 289.
^P Gul. Pic. p. 212. Order. Vital. p. 509. Q. H. Hunt. p. 369. M. West. p. 225.

pearance of justice in his oppressions. He ordered all the English, who had been arbitrarily expelled by the Normans, during his absence, to be restored to their estates^R. But at the same time, he imposed a general tax on the people, that of Danegelt, which had been abolished by the Confessor, and which had always been extremely odious to the nation^S.

CHAP.
IV.

As the vigilance of William overawed the malcontents, their insurrections were more the result of an impatient humour in the people, than of any regular conspiracy, which could give them a rational hope of success against the established power of the Normans. The inhabitants of Exeter, instigated by Githa, mother to king Harold, refused to admit a Norman garrison, and betaking themselves to arms, were strengthened by the accession of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonshire and Cornwall^T. The king hastened with his forces to chastize this revolt; and on his approach, the wiser and more considerable citizens, sensible of the unequal contest, persuaded the people to submit, and to deliver hostages for their obedience. A sudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hostages to be put out, as an earnest of that severity, which the rebels must expect, if they persevered in their revolt^U. The inhabitants were anew seized with terror, and surrendering at discretion, threw themselves at the king's feet, and entreated for clemency and forgiveness. William was not devoid of generosity, when his temper was not hardened either by policy or passion: He was prevailed on to pardon the rebels, and he set guards on all the gates, in order to prevent the rapacity and insolence of his soldiery^X. Githa escaped with her treasures to Flanders^Y. The malcontents of Cornwall imitated the example of Exeter, and met with like treatment: And the king, having built a citadel in that city, which he put under the command of Bald-

P 2

win,

^R Chron. Sax. p. 173. This fact is a full proof, that the Normans had committed great injustice, and were the real cause of the insurrections of the English.

^S Hoveden, p. 450. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197. Atur. Bever. p. 127. ^T Order. Vital. p. 510. ^U Ibid. ^X Ibid.

^Y Hoveden, p. 450. Flor. Wigorn. p. 635.

CHAP. win, son of earl Gilberert^z, returned to Winchester,
 IV. and dispersed his army into their quarters. He was here
 1068. joined by his wife, Matilda, who had not before visited
 England, and whom he now ordered to be crowned by
 archbishop Aldred^A. Soon after, she brought him an
 accession to his family, by the birth of a fourth son, whom
 he named Henry^B. His three elder sons, Robert, Rich-
 ard, and William, still resided in Normandy.

BUT though the king appeared thus fortunate both in
 public and domestic life, the discontents of his English
 subjects argumented daily; and the injuries, committed
 and suffered on both sides, rendered the quarrel between
 them and the Normans absolutely incurable. The inso-
 lence of victorious masters, dispersed throughout the king-
 dom, seemed intolerable to the natives; and wherever
 they found the Normans, separate or assembled in small
 bodies they secretly set upon them, and gratified their
 vengeance by the slaughter of their enemies^C. But an in-
 surrection in the north drew thither the general attention,
 and seemed to promise more important consequences. Ed-
 win and Morcar appeared at the head of this rebellion;
 and these potent noblemen, before they took arms, stipu-
 lated for foreign succours, from their nephew Blethin,
 prince of North-Wales, from Malcolm, king of Scot-
 land, and from Sweyn, king of Denmark. Besides the
 general discontent, which had seized the English; the
 two earls were instigated to this revolt by private in-
 juries. William, in order to insure them to his interests,
 had, on his accession, promised his daughter in marriage
 to Edwin; but either he had never seriously intended to
 perform this engagement, or having changed his plan of
 administration in England from clemency to rigour, he
 thought it was to little purpose, if he gained one family,
 while he enraged the whole nation. When Edwin,
 therefore, renewed his applications, he gave him an ab-
 solute refusal^D; and this disappointment, added to so
 many other reasons of disgust, induced that nobleman
 and his brother to concur with their enraged countrymen,
 and

^z Order. Vital. p. 510. ^A Ibid. Hoveden, p. 450. M.
 West. p. 226. Flor. Wigorn. p. 635. ^B M. West. p. 226.

^C Ibid. p. 225. ^D Order. Vital. p. 511.

and to make one effort for the recovery of their antient liberties. William knew the importance of celerity in quelling an insurrection, supported by such powerful leaders, and so agreeable to the wishes of the people; and having his troops always in readiness, he advanced by great journeys to the north. On his march he gave orders to fortify the castle of Warwick, of which he left Henry de Beaumont governor, and that of Nottingham, which he committed to the custody of William Peverell, another Norman captain^E. He reached York before the rebels were in any condition for resistance, or were joined by any of the foreign succours, which they expected, except a small reinforcement from Wales^F; and the two earls found no other means of safety, but having recourse to the clemency of the victor. Archil, a potent nobleman in those parts, imitated their example, and delivered his son as a hostage of his fidelity^G; nor were the people, thus deserted by their leaders, able to make any farther resistance. But the treatment, which William gave the chieftains, was very different from that which fell to the share of their followers. He observed religiously the terms, which he had granted to the former; and allowed them, for the present, to keep possession of their estates; but he extended the rigors of his confiscations over the latter, and gave away their lands to his foreign adventurers, who, being planted through the whole country, and being possessed of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to spare, destitute of all support, and ready to fall, whenever he should think proper to command their ruin. A peace, which he made with Malcolm who did him homage for Cumberland, seemed, at the same time, to deprive them of all prospect of foreign assistance^I.

THE English were now sensible, that their final destruction was intended; and instead of a sovereign, whom they had at first hoped to gain by their submissions, they had tamely surrendered themselves, without resistance, to a tyrant and a conqueror. Though the early confiscation of Harold's followers might seem iniquitous; being inflicted on men who had never sworn fidelity to the duke of Normandy, who were ignorant of his pretensions, and who only fought in defence of the government, which they

^E Ibid.^F Ibid.^G Ibid.^I Order. Vital. p. 511.

CHAP. they themselves had established in their own country :
 IV. Yet were these rigors, however contrary to the antient
 Saxon laws, excused on account of the urgent necessities

1068.

of the prince ; and those who were not involved in the present ruin, hoped, that they should thenceforth enjoy without molestation their possessions and their dignities. But the successive destruction of so many other families convinced them, that the king intended to rely entirely on the support and affections of foreigners ; and they foresaw new forfeitures, attainders, and violences as the necessary result of this destructive plan of administration. They observed, that no Englishman possessed his confidence, or was intrusted with any command or authority ; and that the strangers, whom a rigorous discipline could have but ill restrained, were encouraged in every act of insolence and tyranny against them. The early submission of the kingdom on its first invasion had exposed the natives to contempt ; the subsequent proofs of their animosity and resentment had made them the object of hatred ; and they were now deprived of every expedient, by which they could hope to make themselves either regarded or beloved by their sovereign. Impressed with the sense of this dismal situation, many Englishmen fled into foreign countries, with an intention of passing their lives abroad free from oppression, or of returning on a favourable opportunity to assist their friends in the recovery of their native liberties^K. Edgar Atheling himself, dreading the insidious caresses of William, was persuaded by Cospatric, a powerful Northumbrian, to escape with him into Scotland ; and he carried thither his two sisters, Margaret and Christina. They were well received by Malcolm, who soon after espoused Margaret, the elder sister^L ; and partly with a view of strengthening his kingdom by the accession of so many strangers, partly in hopes of employing them against the growing power of William, he gave great countenance to all the English exiles^M. Many of them settled there ; and laid the foundation of families which afterwards made a figure in that kingdom.

WHILE

^K Order. Vital. p. 508. M. West. p. 225. M. Paris. p. 4. Sim. Dun. p. 197. ^L Chron. de Mailr. p. 160. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 450, 452. ^M Malmesb. p. 103. M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4.

WHILE the English suffered under these oppressions, even the foreigners were not much at their ease, but finding themselves surrounded on all hands by enraged enemies, who took every advantage against them, and menaced them with still more bloody effects of the public resentment, they began to wish again for the tranquillity and security of their native country. Hugh de Gretnesbil, and Humphrey de Teliol, though entrusted with great commands, desired to be dismissed the service; and some others imitated their example: A desertion which was highly resented by the king, and which he punished by the confiscation of all their possessions^N. But William's bounty to his followers could not fail of alluring many new adventurers into his service; and the rage of the vanquished English served only to excite the attention of the king and these warlike chieftains, and keep them in readiness to suppress every commencement of domestic rebellion or foreign invasion.

It was not long before they found occupation for their prowess and military conduct. Godwin, Edmond, and Magnus, three sons of Harold, had immediately after the defeat at Hastings, sought a retreat in Ireland; where, having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that country, they projected an invasion of England^O, and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, assisted with forces from these several countries, would at once commence hostilities, and rouse the indignation of the English against their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonshire; but found Brian, son of the count of Brittany, at the head of some foreign troops ready to oppose them; and being defeated in several actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ships, and to return with great loss into Ireland^P. The efforts of the Normans were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmost confusion. The more impatient of the Northumbrians had attacked Robert de Comyn, who was appointed governor of Durham; and gaining the advantage over him from his negligence, they put him to death in that city, with seven hundred

^N Order. Vitalis, p. 512. ^O Gul. Genet. p. 290. Order. Vital. p. 513. ^P Gul. Genet. p. 437. ^P Gul. Genet. p. 290. Order. Vital. p. 513. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 246.

CHAP. hundred of his followers ^Q. This example animated the
IV. inhabitants of York, who, rising in arms, slew Robert
Fitz-Richard, their governor ^R; and besieged in the castle
1069. William Mallet, on whom the command now devolved.

A little after, the Danish troops landed from 300 vessels, under the command of Osberne, brother to king Sweyn, and accompanied by Harold and Canute, the two sons of that monarch ^S. Edgar Atheling appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Cospatric, Waltheof, Siward, Bearne, Merleswain, Adelin, and other chieftains ^T, who partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottish succours, partly from their authority in those parts, easily persuaded the warlike and discontented Northumbrians to join the insurrection. Mallet, that he might better provide for the defence of the citadel of York, set fire to some houses, which lay contiguous ^U; but this expedient proved the immediate cause of his destruction. The flames spreading into the neighbouring streets, reduced the whole city to ashes; and the enraged inhabitants; aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confusion to attack the castle, which they carried by assault; and the garrison, amounting to the number of 3000, they put to the sword without mercy ^X.

THIS success proved a signal to many other parts of England, and gave the people an opportunity of shewing their malevolence to the Normans. Hereward, a nobleman in East-Anglia, celebrated for valour, assembled his followers, and taking shelter in the Isle of Ely made inroads on all the neighbouring country ^Y. The English in the counties of Somerset and Dorset rose in arms, and assaulted Montacute, the Norman governor; while the inhabitants of Cornwall and Devon invested Exeter, which, from the memory of William's clemency, still remained faithful to him ^Z. Edric, the Forester, calling in the
assistance

^Q Order. Vital. p. 512. Chron. de Mailr. p. 160. Hoveden, p. 450. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 198. ^R Order. Vital. p. 512. ^S Chron. Sax. p. 174. Order. Vital. p. 513. Hoveden, p. 451. M. West. p. 226. ^T Order. Vital. p. 513. Hoveden, p. 451. Flor. Wigorn. p. 635. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 198. ^U Ibid. Brompton, p. 966. ^X Order. Vital. p. 513. Hoveden, p. 451. Flor. Wigorn. p. 636. Brompton, p. 966. ^Y Ingulf, p. 71. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. ^Z Order. Vital. p. 514.

assistance of the Welsh, laid siege to Shrewsbury, and made head against earl Brient and Fitz-Osberne, who commanded in those quarters^A. The English, every where, repenting of their former easy submission, seemed determined to make by concert one great effort for the recovery of their liberty, and for the expulsion of their oppressors.

WILLIAM, undismayed amidst this scene of confusion, assembled his forces, and animating them with the prospect of new confiscations, and forfeitures, he marched against the rebels in the north, whom he regarded as the most formidable, and whose defeat, he knew, would strike a terror into all the other malcontents. Joining policy to force, he tried, before his approach, to weaken the enemy, by detaching the Danes from them; and he engaged Osberne, by large presents, and by offering him the liberty of plundering the sea-coast, to retire without committing farther hostilities, into Denmark^B. Cospatric, in despair of success, imitated the example; and making his submissions to the king, and paying a sum of money as an atonement for his insurrections, was received into favour, and even invested with the earldom of Northumberland. Waltheof, who long defended York with great courage, was allured with this appearance of clemency; and as William knew how to esteem valour even in an enemy, that nobleman had no reason to repent of this confidence^C. Even Edric, compelled by necessity, made his submissions to the Conqueror, and received forgiveness, which was soon after followed by some degree of trust and favour^D. Malcolm, coming too late to support his confederates, was constrained to retire; and all the English rebels in other parts, except Hereward, who still kept in his fastnesses, dispersed themselves, and left the Normans undisputed masters of the kingdom. Edgar Atheling, with his followers, sought again a retreat in Scotland from the pursuit of his enemies^E.

BUT the seeming clemency of William towards the English leaders proceeded only from artifice, or from his
1070.
New ri-
esteem gors of the
govern-
ment.

^A Ibid. ^B Hoveden, p. 451. Flor. Wigorn. p. 636. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. Sim. Dun. p. 199.
^C Malmesb. p. 104. H. Hunt. p. 369. ^D Hoveden, p. 453. 454. Flor. Wig. p. 636, 637. Sim. Dun. p. 203. ^E Hoveden, p. 452.

CH A P. esteem of individuals : His heart was hardened against all
 IV. compassion towards the people ; and he scrupled no mea-
 1070. sure, however violent or severe, which seemed requisite
 to support his plan of tyrannical administration. Sensible
 of the restless disposition of the Northumbrains, he de-
 termined to incapacitate them ever after from giving him
 disturbance, and he issued orders for laying entirely
 waste that fertile country, which, for the extent of sixty
 miles, lies between the Humber and the Tees^Y. The
 houses were reduced to ashes by the merciless Normans,
 the cattle seized and driven away, the instruments of hus-
 bandry destroyed; and the inhabitants compelled either
 to seek for a subsistence in the southern parts of Scotland,
 or if they lingered in England, from a reluctance to
 abandon their antient habitations, they perished miserably
 in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of an
 hundred thousand persons are computed to have been sa-
 crificed to this stroke of barbarous policy^Z, which, by
 seeking a remedy for a temporary evil, thus inflicted a
 lasting wound on the power and populousness of the na-
 tion.

BUT William, finding himself entirely master of a
 people, who had given him such sensible proofs of their
 impotent rage and animosity, now resolved to proceed to
 extremities against all the natives of England ; and to re-
 duce them to a condition, in which they should no longer
 be formidable to his government. The insurrections and
 conspiracies in so many parts of the kingdom had involved
 the bulk of the landed proprietors, more or less, in the
 guilt of treason ; and the king took advantage of execut-
 ing against them, with the utmost rigor, the laws of for-
 feiture and attainer. Their lives were indeed commonly
 spared ; but their estates were confiscated, and either an-
 nexed to the royal demesnes, or conferred with the most
 profuse bounty on the Normans and other foreigners^A.
 While the king's declared intention was to depress or ra-
 ther entirely extirpate the English gentry^B, it is easy to
 believe,

^Y Chron. Sax. p. 174. Ingulf, p. 79. Malmesb. p. 103.
 Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47.
 M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 199. Brompton, p. 966.
 Knyghton, p. 2344. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 702. ^Z Or-
 der. Vital. p. 515. ^A Malmesb. p. 104. ^B H. Hunt. p.
 370.

believe, that scarce the form of justice would be observed in those violent proceedings^C; and that any suspicions served as the most undoubted proofs of guilt against a people thus devoted to destruction. It was crime sufficient in an Englishman to be opulent or noble or powerful; and the policy of the king, concurring with the rapacity of foreign adventurers, produced almost a total revolution in the landed property of the kingdom. Ancient and honourable families were reduced to beggary; the nobles themselves were every where treated with ignominy and contempt; they had the mortification of seeing their castles and manors possessed by Normans of the meanest birth and lowest stations^D, and they found themselves carefully excluded from every road, which led either to riches or preferment^E.

As power naturally follows property, this revolution alone gave great security to the foreigners; but William, by the new institutions, which he established, took also care

^C There is a paper or record of the family of Sharneborne, which pretends, that that family, which was Saxon, was restored upon proving their innocence, as well as other Saxon families, which were in the same situation. Though this paper was able to impose on such great antiquarians as Spelman (see Gloss in verbo *Drenges*) and Dugdale, (see Baron. vol. i. p. 118.) it is proved by Dr. Brady (see ansr. to Petyt, p. 11, 12.) to have been a forgery; and is allowed for such by Tyrrel, though a pertinacious defender of his party notions, (see his hist. vol. ii. introd. p. 51. 73.) Ingulf, p. 70. tells us, that very early Hereward, though absent during the time of the conquest, was turned out of all his estate, and could not obtain redress. William even plundered the monasteries. Flor. Wigorn p. 636. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 48. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun p. 200. Diceto, p. 482. Brompton, p. 967. Knyghton, p. 2344. Alur. Beverl. p. 130. We are told by Ingulf, that Ivo de Taillebois plundered the monastery of Croyland of a great part of its land; and no redress could be obtained.

^D Order. Vitalis, p. 521. M. West. p. 229.

^E The obliging all the inhabitants to put out their fires and lights at certain hours, upon the sounding of a bell, called the *courseu*, is represented by Polydore Virgil, lib. 9. as a mark of the ferocity of the English. But this was a law of police, which William had previously established in Normandy. See du Moulin, hist. de Normandie, p. 160. The same law had place in Scotland. LL. Burgor, cap. 86.

CHAP. care to retain for ever the military authority in those hands, which had enabled him to subdue the kingdom. He introduced into England the feudal law, which he found established in France and Normandy, and which, during that age, was the foundation both of the stability and of the disorders in most of the monarchical governments of Europe. He divided all the lands of England, with very few exceptions, beside the royal demesnes, into baronies; and he conferred these, with the reservation of stated services and payments, on the most considerable of his adventurers. These great barons, who held immediately of the crown, shared out a great part of their lands to other foreigners, who were denominated knights or vassals, and who paid their lord the same duty and submission in peace and war, which he himself owed to his sovereign. The whole kingdom contained about 700 chief tenants, and 60,215 knights-fees^F; and as none of the native English were admitted into the first rank, the few, who retained their landed property, were glad to be received into the second, and under the protection of some powerful Norman, to load themselves and their posterity with this grievous burthen, for estates which they had received free from their ancestors.^G The small mixture of English, which entered into this civil or military fabric, (for it partook of both species) was so restrained by subordination under the foreigners, that the Norman dominion seemed now to be fixed on the most durable basis, and to defy all the efforts of its enemies.

THE better to unite the parts of the government, and to bind them into one system, which might serve both for defence against foreigners, and for the support of domestic tranquillity, William reduced the ecclesiastical revenues under the same feudal law; and though he had courted the church on his first invasion and accession, he now subjected it to burthens, which the clergy regarded as a grievous slavery, and as totally unbecoming their profession. The bishops and abbots were obliged, when required, to furnish to the king during a war a number of knights or military tenants, proportioned to the extent of property

^F Order. Vital. p. 523. Secretum Abbatis, apud Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 573. Spelm. Gloss. in verbo *Feodum*. Sir Robert Cotton. ^G M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4. Bracton, lib. 1. cap. 11. num. 1. Fleta, lib. 1. cap. 8. n. 2.

property possessed by each see or abbey; and they were liable, in case of failure, to the same penalties which were exacted from the laity^H. The pope and the ecclesiastics exclaimed against this tyranny, as they called it; but the king's authority was so well established over the army, who held every thing from his bounty, that superstition itself, even in that age, when it was most prevalent, was constrained to bend under his superior influence.

CHAP.
IV.

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BUT as the great body of the clergy were still natives, the king had much reason to dread the effects of their resentment; and he therefore used the precaution of expelling the English from all the considerable dignities, and of advancing foreigners in their place. The partiality of the Confessor towards the Normans had been so great, that, aided by their superior learning, it had promoted them to many of the sees of England; and even before the period of the conquest, scarce more than six or seven of the prelates were natives of the country. But among these was Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury; a man, who, by his address and vigour, by the greatness of his family and alliances, by the extent of his possessions, as well as by the dignity of his office, and his authority over the English, gave jealousy to the king^I. Though William had, on his accession, affronted this prelate, by employing the archbishop of York to officiate at his consecration, he was careful, on other occasions, to load him with honours and caresses, and to avoid the giving him farther offence, till the opportunity should offer of effectuating his final destruction^K. The suppression of the late rebellions, and the total subjection of the English, made him hope, that an attempt against Stigand, however violent, would be covered by his great successes, and be overlooked amidst the other important revolutions, which affected so deeply the property and liberty of the kingdom. Yet, notwithstanding these mighty advantages, he did not think it safe to violate the reverence usually paid the primate, but under cover of a new superstition, which he was the great instrument of introducing into England.

THE doctrine which exalted the papacy above all human power, had gradually diffused itself from the city on in ecclesiastical and govern-ment.

^H M. Paris, p. 5. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 248. ^I Parker, p. 161. ^K Parker, p. 164. Knyghton, p. 2344.

CHAP. and court of Rome; and was, during that age, much
 IV. more prevalent in the southern than in the northern king-
 1070. doms of Europe. Pope Alexander, who had assisted
 William in his conquests, reasonably expected, that the
 French and Normans would import into England, the
 same reverence for his sacred character, with which they
 were imbued in their own country; and would break
 the spiritual, as well as civil independency of the Saxons,
 who had hitherto conducted their ecclesiastical govern-
 ment, with an acknowledgment indeed of primacy in
 the see of Rome, but without much idea of its title to
 dominion or authority. As soon, therefore, as the Nor-
 man prince seemed fully established on the throne, the
 pope dispatched Ermentroy, bishop of Sion, as his le-
 gate into England; and this prelate was the first, who
 had ever appeared with that character in any part of the
 British islands. The king, though he was probably led
 by principle to pay this submission to Rome, determined,
 as is usual, to employ the incident as a means of serving
 his political purposes, and of degrading those English pre-
 lates, who were become obnoxious to him. The legate
 submitted to become the instrument of his tyranny; and
 naturally thought, that the more violent the exertion of
 power, the more certainly did it confirm the authority of
 that court from which he derived his commission. He
 summoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and ab-
 bots at Winchester; and being assisted by two cardinals,
 Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, archbishop
 of Canterbury, to answer for his conduct^L. The pri-
 mate was accused of three crimes; the holding the see of
 Winchester together with that of Canterbury; the of-
 ficiating in the pall of Robert, his predecessor; and the
 having received his own pall from Benedict IX. who
 was afterwards deposed for simony, and for intrusion into
 the papacy^M. These crimes of Stigand were mere pre-
 tences; since the first had been a practice not unusual in
 England, and was never any where subjected to a higher
 penalty than a resignation of one of the sees; the second
 was a pure ceremonial; and as Benedict was the only
 pope who then officiated, and his acts were never rescind-
 ed,

^L Flor. Wigorn. p. 636. ^M Hoveden, p. 453. Dileto,
 p. 482. Knyghton, p. 2345. Anglia Sacra, vol. I. p. 5, 6.
 Ypod. Neust. p. 438.

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ed, all the prelates of the church, especially those who lay at a distance, were very excusable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was resolved on, and was prosecuted with great severity. The legate degraded him from his dignity, and the king confiscated his estate, and cast him into prison, where he continued, in poverty and want, during the remainder of his life. Like rigor was exercised against the other English prelates: Agelric, bishop of Selesey, and Agelmare, of Elmham, were deposed by the legate, and imprisoned by the king^N. Many considerable abbots shared the same fate^O: Egelwin, bishop of Durham, fled the kingdom^P: Wulstan, of Worcester, a man of an inoffensive character, was the only English prelate who escaped this general proscription^Q, and remained in possession of his dignity. Aldréd, archbishop of York, who had set the crown on William's head, had died a little before of sorrow and vexation, and had left his malediction to that prince, on account of the breach of his coronation-oath, and of the extreme tyranny, with which he saw he was determined to treat his English subjects^R.

It was a fixed maxim in this reign, as well as in some of the subsequent, that no native of the island should ever be advanced to any dignity, ecclesiastical, civil, or military^S. The king therefore, upon Stigand's deposition, promoted Lanfranc, a Milanese monk, celebrated for his learning and piety, to the vacant see^T. This prelate was very rigid in defending the prerogatives of his station; and after a long process before the pope, he obliged Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed

^N Hoveden, p. 453. M. West. p. 226. Flor. Wig. p. 636.

^O Diceto, p. 482. ^P Hoveden, p. 452. M. West. p. 226.

M. Paris, p. 5. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 249.

^Q Brompton relates, that Wulstan was also deprived by the synod; but refusing to deliver his pastoral staff and ring to any but the person from whom he first received it, he went immediately to king Edward's tomb, and struck the staff so deeply into the stone, that none but himself was able to pull it out: Upon which he was allowed to keep his bishopric. This instance may serve, instead of many, as a specimen of the monkish miracles. See also the Annals of Burton, p. 284.

^R Malmesb. de gest. Pont. p. 154. ^S Ingulf, p. 70, 71.

^T Order. Vital. p. 519. Hoveden, p. 453. Flor. Wig. p. 636. Sim. Dun. p. 202. Diceto, p. 483.

CHAP. ed to the see of York, to acknowledge the primacy of
 IV. the archbishop of Canterbury ^v. Where ambition can
 1070. be so happy as to cover its attempts, even to the person
 himself, under the appearance of principle, it is the most
 incurable and inflexible of all human passions. Hence
 Lanfranc's zeal to promote the interests of the papacy,
 by which he himself augmented his own authority, was
 indefatigable ^x; and met with proportionable success.
 The devoted attachment to Rome continually increased
 in England; and being favoured by the sentiments of the
 conquerors, as well as by the monastic establishments for-
 merly introduced by Edred, and by Edgar, it soon reach-
 ed the same height, at which, during some time, it had
 stood in France and Italy ^y. It afterwards went much
 farther; being favoured by that very remote situation,
 which had at first obstructed its progress; and being less
 checked by knowledge and a liberal education, which
 were still somewhat more common in the southern coun-
 tries.

THE prevalence of this superstitious spirit became
 very dangerous to some of William's successors, and very
 incommodious to most of them; but the arbitrary power
 of this king over the English, and his extensive authority
 over the foreigners, kept him from feeling any present in-
 conveniencies from it. He retained the church in great
 subjection, as well as his lay subjects; and would allow
 none, of whatever character, to dispute his sovereign
 will and pleasure. He prohibited his subjects to acknow-
 ledge any one for pope whom he himself had not pre-
 viously received: He required, that all the ecclesiastical
 canons, voted in any synod, should first be laid before
 him, and be ratified by his authority: Even bulls or letters
 from Rome, before they were produced, must receive
 the same sanction: And none of his ministers or barons,
 whatever offences they were guilty of, must be subjected
 to spiritual censures, till he himself had given his consent
 to their excommunication ^z. These regulations were
 worthy

^v Chron. Sax. p. 175, 176. Ingulf, p. 92. M. Paris, p. 6. Diceto, p. 484. Brompton, p. 970, 971, 972. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 5. ^x Selden in Fleta, cap. 6.

^y M. West. p. 228. Lanfranc wrote in defence of the real presence against Berengarius; and in those ages of stupidity and ignorance, he was greatly applauded for that performance.

^z Eadmer, p. 6.

worthy of a sovereign, and kept united the civil and ecclesiastical powers, which the principles introduced by this prince had an immediate tendency to separate.

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BUT the English had the cruel mortification to find, that their king's authority, however acquired or however extended, was all employed to their oppression; and that the scheme of their subjection, attended with every circumstance of insult and indignity^A, was deliberately formed by the prince, and wantonly prosecuted by his followers^B. William had even entertained the difficult project of totally abolishing the English language; and, for that purpose, he ordered, that in all the schools throughout the kingdom, the youth should be instructed in the French tongue, a practice which was continued from custom till after the reign of Edward III. and was never indeed totally discontinued in England. The pleadings in the supreme courts of judicature were in French^C: The deeds were often drawn in the same language: The laws were composed in that idiom^D: No other tongue was used at court: It became the language of all fashionable societies; and the English themselves, ashamed of their own country, affected to excel in that foreign dialect. From this attention of William, and from the extensive foreign dominions, long annexed to the crown of England, proceeded that mixture of French, which is at present to be found in the English tongue, and which composes the greatest and best part of our language. But amidst these endeavours to depress the English nation, the king, moved by the remonstrances of some of his prelates, and by the earnest desires of the people, restored a few of the laws of king Edward^E; which, though seemingly of no great consequence towards the protection of general liberty, gave them extreme satisfaction, as a memorial of their antient government, and an unusual mark of complaisance in their imperious conquerors^F.

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^A Order. Vital. p. 523. H. Hunt. p. 370. ^B Ingulf, p. 71. ^C 36 Edw. III. cap. 15. Selden Spicileg. ad Eadmer, p. 189. Fortescue de laud. leg. Angl. cap. 48. ^D Ingulf, p. 71, 88. Chron. Rothom. A. D. 1066. ^E Ingulf, p. 88. Brompton, p. 982. Knyghton, p. 2355. Hoveden, p. 600.

^F What these laws were of Edward the Confessor, which the English, every reign during a century and an half,

CHAP. THE situation of the two great earls, Morcar and
 IV. Edwin, became now very disagreeable. Though they
 had retained their allegiance, during the general insur-
 rection of their countrymen, they had not gained the
 king's confidence, and they found themselves exposed to
 the malignity of the courtiers, who envied them on ac-
 count of their opulence and greatness, and at the same
 time involved them in that general contempt which they
 bore the English. Sensible that they had entirely lost their
 dignity, and could not even hope to remain long in safe-
 ty; they determined, though too late, to run the same
 fate with their countrymen^G; and while Edwin retired
 to his estate in the north, with a view of commencing
 an insurrection, Morcar took shelter in the Isle of Ely
 with the brave Hereward, who, secured by the inacces-
 sible situation of that place, skill defended himself against
 the Normans^H. But this attempt served only to acce-
 lerate the ruin of the few English, who had hitherto been
 able to preserve their rank or fortune during the past con-
 vulsions. William employed all his endeavours to sub-
 due the Isle of Ely; and having surrounded it with flat-
 bottomed boats, and made a causeway through the mor-
 asses for the extent of two miles, he obliged the rebels
 to surrender at discretion^I. Hereward alone forced his
 way, sword in hand, through the enemy; and still con-
 tinued

desire so passionately to have restored, is much disputed by an-
 tiquarians, and our ignorance of them seems one of the great-
 est defects in the ancient English history. The collection of
 laws in Wilkins, which pass under the name of Edward, are
 plainly a posterior and an ignorant compilation. Those to be
 found in Ingulf are genuine; but so imperfect, and contain so
 few clauses favourable to the subject, that we see no great rea-
 son for contending for them so vehemently. It is probable,
 that the English meant the *common law*, as it prevailed during
 the reign of Edward; which we may conjecture to have been
 more indulgent to liberty than the Norman institutions. The
 most material articles of it were comprehended in Magna
 Charta.

^G Sim. Dun. p. 203. Brompton, p. 969. Knyghton, p.
 2347. ^H Hoveden, p. 454. Alur. Beverl. p. 131.
^I Chron. Sax. p. 181. Hoveden, p. 454. M. West. p. 227.
 Flor. Wig. p. 637. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 203. Alur.
 Beverl. p. 131.

tinued his hostilities by sea against the Normans, till at last William, charmed with his bravery, received him into favour, and restored him to his estate. Earl Morcar, and Egelwin, bishop of Durham, who had joined the malcontents, were thrown into prison, and the latter soon after died in confinement^k. Edwin, attempting to make his escape into Scotland, was betrayed by some of his followers; and was killed by a party of Normans to the great affliction of the English, and even to that of William, who paid a tribute of generous tears to the memory of this gallant and beautiful youth^l. The king of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by these convulsions, had fallen upon the northern countries; but on the approach of William, he retired; and when the king entered his country, he was glad to make peace, and to pay the usual homage to the English crown^m. To compleat the king's prosperity, Edgar Atheling himself despairing of success, and weary of a fugitive life, submitted to his enemy; and receiving a handsome allowance, was permitted to live in England unmolestedⁿ. But these acts of generosity towards the leaders were disgraced, as usual, by William's rigor against the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands to be lopped off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the prisoners, whom he had taken in the Isle of Ely; and he dispersed them in that miserable condition through the country, as monuments of his severity^o.

THE province of Maine in France had, by the will of Hebert, the last count, fallen under the dominion of William some years before his conquest of England; but the inhabitants, dissatisfied with the Norman government, and instigated by Fulk, count of Anjou, who had some pretensions to the succession, now rose in rebellion, and expelled the magistrates, whom the king had placed over them. The full settlement of England afforded him leisure to punish this insult on his authority; but

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Q 2

^k Flor. Wig. p. 637. Sim. Dum. p. 203. ^l Order. Vital. p. 521. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 48.
^m Chron. de Mailr. p. 160. Hoveden, p. 454. M. West. p. 227. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 48. M. Paris, p. 5.
ⁿ Chron. de Mailr. p. 160. Malmesf. p. 103. Hoveden, p. 452. Flor. Wig. p. 638. M. Paris, p. 5. ^o Hoveden, p. 454. Sim. Dum. p. 203.

CHAP. being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from this
 IV. island, he carried over a considerable army, composed
 almost entirely of English^r, and joining them to some
 1073. troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province. The English appeared ambitious of distinguishing themselves on this occasion, and of retrieving that character of valour, which had long been national among them; but which their late easy subjection under the Normans had somewhat degraded and obscured. Perhaps too they hoped, that, by their zeal and activity, they might recover the confidence of their sovereign, as their ancestors had formerly, by like means, gained the affections of Canute; and might conquer his inveterate prejudices in favour of his own countrymen. The king's military conduct, seconded by such brave troops, soon overcame all opposition in Maine: The inhabitants were obliged to submit, and the count of Anjou relinquished his pretensions.

Infurrection of the Norman barons.

BUT during these transactions, the government of England was greatly disturbed; and that too by those very foreigners, who owed every thing to the king's bounty, and who were the sole object of his friendship and regard. The chieftains, who had engaged with the duke of Normandy in the conquest of England, were endowed with the most independent spirit; and though they obeyed their leader in the field, they would have regarded with disdain the richest acquisitions, had they been required, in return, to submit, in their civil government, to the arbitrary will of one man. But the imperious character of William, encouraged by his absolute dominion over the English, and often impelled by the necessity of his affairs, had prompted him to stretch his authority over the Normans themselves, beyond what the free genius of that victorious people could easily bear. The discontents were become very general among those haughty nobles; and even Roger, earl of Hereford, son and heir of Fitz-Osborne, the king's chief favourite, was strongly infected with them. This nobleman, intending to marry his sister to Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk, had thought it his duty to inform the king of his purpose, and to desire the royal consent; but meeting with a refusal, he proceeded nevertheless to finish the nuptials,
 and

and assembled all his friends, and those of Guader, to attend the solemnity ^Q. The two earls, disgusted with the denial of their request, and dreading William's resentment for their disobedience, here prepared matters for a revolt; and during the gaiety of the festival, while the company was heated with wine, they opened the design to their guests. They inveighed against the arbitrary conduct of the king; his tyranny towards the English, whom they affected on this occasion to commiserate; his imperious behaviour to his barons of the noblest birth; and his apparent intention of reducing the victors and the vanquished to a like ignominious servitude ^R. Amidst their complaints, the indignity of submitting to a bastard ^S was not forgot; the certain prospect of success in a revolt, by the assistance of the Danes and the discontented English, was insisted on; and the whole company, inflamed with the same sentiments, and warmed by the jollity of the entertainment, entered, by a solemn engagement, into the design of shaking off the royal authority ^T. Even earl Waltheof, who was present, inconsiderately expressed his approbation of the conspiracy, and promised his concurrence towards its success ^U.

THIS nobleman, the last of the English, who, for some generations, possessed any power or authority, had, after his capitulation at York, been received into favour by the Conqueror, had even married Judith, niece to that prince, and had been promoted to the earldoms of Huntington and Northampton ^X. Cospatric, earl of Northumberland, having, on some new disgust from William, retired into Scotland, where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm; Waltheof was appointed his successor in that important command, and seemed still to possess the confidence and friendship of his sovereign ^Y. But as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable, that

^Q W. Malm. p. 104. Flor. Wig. p. 638. Diceto, p. 486. Brompton, p. 974. ^R Order. Vital. p. 534. M. Paris, p. 7.

^S William was so little ashamed of his birth, that he assumed the appellation of Bastard in some of his letters and charters. Spelm. Gloss. in verb. *Bastardus*. Camden in *Richmondshire*.

^T Malmesb. p. 104. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 456. ^U Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 49. Diceto, p. 486.

^X Order. Vital. p. 522. Hoveden, p. 454. ^Y Sim. Dun. p. 205.

CHAP. that the tyranny exercised over the English lay heavy upon his mind, and destroyed all the satisfaction which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement.

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When a prospect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he hastily embraced it; while the fumes of the liquor, and the ardour of the company, prevented him from reflecting on the consequences of that rash attempt. But after his cool judgment returned, he foresaw, that the conspiracy of these discontented barons was not likely to prove successful against the established power of William; or if it did, that the slavery of the English, instead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous, under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whose union and discord would be equally oppressive to the people. Tormented with these reflections, he opened his mind to his wife, Judith, of whose fidelity he entertained no suspicion, but who, having secretly fixed her affections on another, took this opportunity of ruining her easy and credulous husband. She conveyed intelligence of the conspiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumstance, which, she believed, would tend to enrage him against Waltheof, and render him absolutely implacable^z. Meanwhile, the earl, still unsatisfied with regard to the part which he should act, discovered the secret in confession^a to Lanfranc, on whose probity and judgment he had a great reliance; and was persuaded by the prelate, that he owed no fidelity to those rebellious barons, who had by surprise gained his consent to a crime; that his first duty was to his sovereign and benefactor, his next to himself and his family; and that if he seized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt, by revealing it, the temerity of the conspirators was so great, that they would give some other person the means of acquiring the merit of the discovery. Waltheof, convinced by these arguments, went over to Normandy^b; but, though he was well received by the king, and thanked for his fidelity, the account previously transmitted by Judith had sunk deep into William's mind, and destroyed all the merit of her husband's repentance.

THE

^z Order. Vital. p. 336. ^a Ingulf, p. 72. Hoveden, p. 456. Diceto, p. 486. Brompton, p. 974. Anst. Beyerl. p. 34. Ypod. Nestl. p. 439. ^b Malmet. p. 105. Hoveden, p. 456. Flor. Wig. p. 638.

THE conspirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure, immediately concluded the design to be betrayed; and they flew to arms, before their schemes were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, in whose aid they placed their chief confidence. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in those parts, who, supported by the bishop of Worcester and the abbot of Evesham, raised some forces, and prevented the earl from passing the Severne, or advancing into the heart of the kingdom^C. The earl of Norfolk was defeated at Fugadun, near Cambridge, by Odo, the regent, assisted by Richard de Bienfaite, and William de Warrenne, the two justiciaries of the kingdom^D. The prisoners taken in this action had their right foot cut off, as a punishment of their treason: The earl himself escaped to Norwich, thence to Denmark; where the Danish fleet, who had made an unsuccessful attempt upon the coast of England^E, soon after arrived, and informed him, that all his confederates were suppressed, and were either killed, banished, or taken prisoners^F. Ralph retired in despair to Brittany, where he possessed a large estate, and noble jurisdictions^G.

THE king, who hastened over to England, in order to suppress the insurrection, found, that nothing remained but the punishment of the criminals, which he executed with great severity. Many of the rebels were hanged; some had their eyes put out; others their hands cut off^H. But William, agreeably to his usual maxims, showed more lenity to the leader, the earl of Hereford, who was only condemned to a forfeiture of his estate, and to imprisonment during the king's pleasure. He seemed even disposed to remit this last part of the punishment; had not Roger, by a fresh insolence, provoked him

^C Hoveden, p. 456. Flor. Wig. p. 638. Diceto, p. 486.

^D Order. Vital. p. 535. Hoveden, p. 456. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 183. M. Paris, p. 7.

^F Many of the fugitive Normans are thought to have fled into Scotland; where they were protected, as well as the fugitive English, by Malcolm. Whence come the many French and Norman families, which are found at present in that country.

^G Order. Vital. p. 535. Hoveden, p. 457. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 183. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. Diceto, p. 486. Brompton, p. 974.

CHAP. him to render his confinement perpetual¹. But Waltheof, IV. being an Englishman, was not treated with so much humanity, though his guilt, always much inferior to that of

1075. the other conspirators, was atoned for by a very early repentance and returned to his duty. William, instigated by his niece, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for so rich a forfeiture, ordered him to be tried, 29th April. condemned, and executed^K. The English, who considered this nobleman as the last resource of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his reliques, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity^L. The infamous Judith, falling soon after under the king's displeasure, was abandoned by all the world, and passed the rest of her life in contempt, remorse, and misery^M.

NOTHING remained to complete William's satisfaction but the punishment of Ralph de Guader; and he hastened over to Normandy, in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal. But though the contest seemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the king of England, Ralph was so well supported, both by the earl of Brittany and the king of France, that William, after besieging him for some time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterprize, and make with those powerful princes a peace, in which Ralph himself was included^N. England, during, his absence, remained in tranquillity; and nothing remarkable occurred, except two ecclesiastical synods, which were summoned, one at London, another at Winchester. In the former, the precedency among the episcopal sees was settled, and the seat of some of them was removed from small villages to the most considerable town within the diocese^O. In the second was transacted a business of some more importance.

1076. THE industry and perseverance are surprising, with which the popes had been treasuring up powers and pretensions during so many ages of ignorance; while each pontiff employed every fraud for advancing purposes of im-

¹ Order. Vital. p. 535. Hoveden, p. 457. ^K Order. Vital. p. 536. Hoveden, p. 457. ^L Order. Vital. p. 543. Malm. p. 104. ^M Ingulf, p. 72, 73. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 183. Chron. de Mailr. p. 160. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. M. Paris, p. 7. ^O Ingulf, p. 93. Brompton, p. 975.

imaginary piety, and cherished all claims which might turn to the advantage of his successors, though he himself could not expect ever to reap any benefit from them.

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All this immense store of spiritual and civil authority was now devolved on Gregory VII. of the name of Hildebrand, the most enterprising pontiff who had ever filled that chair, and the least restrained by fear, decency, or moderation. Not contented with shaking off the yoke of the emperors, who had hitherto exercised the power of appointing the pope on every vacancy, or at least of ratifying his election; he undertook the arduous task of disjoining entirely the ecclesiastical from the civil power, and of excluding profane laymen from the right which they had assumed, of filling the vacancies of bishoprics, abbeys, and other spiritual dignities^y. The sovereigns, who had long exercised this power, and who had acquired it, not by encroachments on the church, but on the people, to whom it originally belonged^z, made great opposition to this claim of the court of Rome; and Henry IV. the present emperor, defended the prerogative of his crown with a vigour and resolution suitable to its importance. The few offices, either civil or military, which the feudal institution left the sovereign the power of bestowing, made the prerogative of conferring the pastoral ring and staff the most valuable jewel of the royal diadem; especially as the general ignorance of the age bestowed a weight on the ecclesiastical offices, even beyond the great extent of power and property which belonged to them. Superstition, the child of ignorance, invested the clergy with an authority almost sacred; and as they possessed the little learning of the age, their interposition became requisite in all civil business, and a real usefulness in common life was thus superadded to the spiritual sanctity of their character.

WHEN the usurpations, therefore, of the church had come to such maturity as to embolden her to attempt extorting the right of investitures from the temporal power, Europe, especially Italy and Germany, was thrown into the most violent convulsions, and the pope and the emperor waged implacable war against each other. Gregory even dared to fulminate the sentence of excommunication

^y L'Abbe Conc. tom. 10. p. 371, 372. con. 2.
Paolo sopra benef. eccles. p. 30.

^z Padre

CHAP. tion against Henry and his adherents, to pronounce him
 IV. rightfully deposed, to free his subjects from their oaths of
 allegiance; and, instead of shocking mankind by this
 1076. gross encroachment on the civil authority, he found the
 stupid people ready to second his most exorbitant pretensions. Every minister, servant, or vassal of the emperor, who received any disgust, covered his rebellion under the pretence of principle; and even the mother of this monarch, forgetting all the ties of nature, was seduced to countenance the insolence of his enemies. Princes themselves, unattentive to the pernicious consequences of these papal claims, employed them for their present purposes: And the controversy, spreading into every city of Italy, engendered the parties of Guelf and Ghibbelin; the most durable and most inveterate factions that ever arose from the mixture of ambition and superstition. Besides numberless assassinations, tumults, and convulsions, to which they gave rise, it is computed that the quarrel occasioned no less than sixty battles in the reign of Henry IV. and eighteen in that of his successor, Henry V. when the claims of the sovereign pontiff finally prevailed^A.

BUT the bold spirit of Gregory, not dismayed with the vigorous opposition, which he met with from the emperor, extended his usurpations all over Europe; and well knowing the nature of mankind, whose blind astonishment ever inclines them to yield to the most impudent pretensions, he seemed determined to set no bounds to the spiritual, or rather temporal monarchy, which he had undertaken to erect. He pronounced the sentence of excommunication against Nicephorus, emperor of the East: Robert Guiscard, the adventurous Norman, who had acquired the dominion of Naples, was attacked by the same dangerous weapon: He degraded Boleslas, king of Poland, from the rank of king; and even deprived Poland of the title of a kingdom: He attempted to treat Philip, king of France, with the same rigor, which he had employed against the emperor^B: He pretended to the entire property and dominion of Spain; and he shared it out amongst adventurers, who undertook to conquer it from the Saracens, and to hold it in vassalage of

^A Padre Paolo sopra benef. eccles. p. 113.
 Greg. VII. epist. 32. 35. lib. 2. epist. 5.

^B Epist.

of the see of Rome^c: Even the Christian bishops, on whose aid he relied in subduing the temporal princes, saw that he was determined to reduce them to servitude; and by assuming the whole legislative and judicial power of the church, to 'concenter all authority in the sovereign pontiff^d.

WILLIAM the Conqueror, the most potent, the most haughty, and the most vigorous prince in Europe, was not, amidst all his splendid successes, secure from the attacks of this enterprising prelate. Gregory wrote him a letter, requiring him to fulfil his promise in doing homage for the kingdom of England to the see of Rome, and to send him over that tribute, which all his predecessors had been accustomed to pay to the vicar of Christ. By the tribute, he meant Peter's pence; which, though at first a charitable donation of the Saxon princes, was interpreted, according to the usual practice of the Romish court, to be a badge of subjection acknowledged by the kingdom. William replied, that the money should be remitted as usual: but that he neither had promised to do homage to Rome, nor was it in the least his purpose to impose that servitude on his state^e. And the better to shew Gregory his independence, he refused, notwithstanding the frequent complaints of the pope, the English bishops liberty to attend a general council, which that pontiff had summoned against his enemies.

BUT though the king shewed this vigour in supporting the royal dignity, he was infected with the general superstition of the age, and he did not perceive the ambitious scope of those institutions, which, under the colour of strictness in religion, were introduced or promoted by the court of Rome. Gregory, while he was throwing all Europe into combustion by his violence and impostures, affected an anxious care for the purity of manners; and even the chaste pleasures of the marriage-bed were inconsistent, in his opinion, with the sanctity of the sacerdotal character. He had issued a decree prohibiting the marriage of priests, excommunicating all clergymen who retained their wives, declaring all such unlawful commerce to be fornication, and rendering it criminal in the laity to attend divine worship when such profane priests offi-

^c Epist. Greg. VII. lib. 1. epist. 7. ^d Greg. epist. lib. 2. epist. 55. ^e Spicileg. Seldeni ad Eadmer, p. 164.

CHAP. officiated at the altar ^F. This point was a great object in the politics of the Roman pontiffs; and it cost them infinitely more pains to establish it than the propagation of

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any speculative absurdity, which they had ever attempted to introduce. Many synods were summoned in different parts of Europe, before it was finally settled; and it was there constantly remarked, that the younger clergymen complied cheerfully with the pope's decrees in this particular, and that the chief reluctance appeared in those who were more advanced in years: An event so little conformable to men's natural expectations, that it could not fail to be glossed on, even in that blind and superstitious age. William allowed the pope's legate to assemble, in his absence, a synod at Winchester, in order to settle the celibacy of the clergy; but the church of England could not yet be carried the whole length expected; and the synod was content with decreeing, that the bishops should not thenceforth ordain any priests or deacons without exacting from them a promise of celibacy; but that none, except those who belonged to collegiate or cathedral churches, should be obliged to separate from their wives.

Revolt of
prince
Robert.

THE king passed some years in Normandy; but his long residence there was not entirely owing to his declared preference of that dutchy: His presence was also necessary for composing those disturbances, which had arisen in that favourite territory, and which had even originally proceeded from his own family. Robert, his eldest son, surnamed Gambaron or Courthose, from his short legs, was a prince, who inherited all the bravery of his family, and nation; but without that policy and dissimulation, by which his father was so much distinguished, and which, no less than his military valour, had contributed to his great successes. Greedy of fame, impatient of contradiction, without reserve in his friendships, declared in his enmities, this prince could endure no controul even from his imperious father, and openly aspired to that independence, to which his temper, as well as some circumstances in his situation, strongly invited him ^G. When William first received the submissions of the
pro-

^F Hoveden, p. 455, 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 638. Spel. Concil. fol. 13. A. D. 1076. ^G Order. Vital. 545. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 639.

province of Maine, he had promised the inhabitants that Robert should be their prince; and before he undertook the expedition against England, he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his successor in Normandy, and had obliged the barons of that dutchy to do him homage as to their future sovereign. By this artifice, he had endeavoured to appease the jealousy of his neighbours, as affording them a prospect of separating England from his dominions on the continent; but when Robert demanded of him the execution of those engagements, he gave him an absolute refusal, and told him, according to the homely saying, that he never intended to throw off his cloaths, till he went to bed^H. Robert openly declared his discontent; and was suspected of secretly instigating the king of France and the earl of Brittany to the opposition which they made to William, and which had formerly frustrated his attempts upon the town of Dol. And as the quarrel still augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a strong jealousy of his two surviving brothers, William and Henry, (for Richard was killed in hunting, by a stag) who, by greater submission and complaisance, had acquired the affections of their father. In this disposition, the greatest trifle sufficed to produce a rupture between them.

THE three princes, residing with their father in the castle of l'Aigle in Normandy, were one day engaged in sport together; and after much frolic, the two younger took it into their head to throw over some water on Robert as he passed through the court on leaving their apartment^I; a pastime, which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the suggestions of Alberic, de Grentmesnil, son of that Hugh de Grentmesnil, whom William had formerly deprived of his fortunes, when that baron deserted him during his greatest difficulties in England. The young nobleman, mindful of the injury, persuaded the prince, that this action was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to resent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his sword, ran up stairs, with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers^K. The whole castle was full of tumult, which the king himself, who hastened from his apartment, found some difficulty to appease. But he could by
no

^H Chron. de Mailr. p. 160.^I Order. Vital. p. 545.^K Order. Vital. p. 545.

CHAP.
IV.

1076

no means appease the resentment of his eldest son, who complaining of his partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made him for the insult, left the court that very evening, and hastened to Rouen, with an intention of seizing, the citadel of that place^L. But being disappointed in this view by the precaution and vigilance of Roger de Ivery, the governor, he fled to Hugh de Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him protection in his castles; and he openly levied war against his father^M. The popular character of the prince, and, a sympathy of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Brittany, to take part with him; and it was suspected that Matilda, his mother, whose favourite he was, supported him in his rebellion by secret remittances of money, and by the encouragement, which she gave his partisans.

1079.

ALL the hereditary provinces of William, as well as family, were during several years thrown into convulsion by this war; and he was obliged at last to have recourse to England, where that species of military government, which he had established, gave him greater authority than the antient feudal institutions permitted him to exercise in Normandy. He called over an army of English under his antient captains, who soon expelled Robert and his adherents from their retreats, and restored the sovereign's authority in all his dominions. The young prince was obliged to take shelter in the castle of Gerberoy in the Beauvoisis, which the king of France, who secretly fomented all these discords, had provided for him. In this fortress he was closely besieged by his father, against whom, having a strong garrison, he made a gallant defence. There passed under the walls of this place many rencounters, which resembled more the single combats of chivalry, than the military actions of armies; but one of them was remarkable for its circumstances and its event. Robert happened to encounter with the king, who was concealed by his helmet; and both of them being valiant, a fierce combat ensued, till at last the young prince wounded his father in the arm, and threw him from his horse. On calling out for assistance, his voice discovered him

^L Ibid. ^M Ibid. Hoveden, p. 457. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Diceto, p. 487.

him to his son, who, struck with remorse for his past crime, and astonished with the apprehensions of one much greater, which he had so nearly incurred, instantly threw himself at his father's feet, craved pardon for his offences, and offered to purchase forgiveness by any atonement^N. The resentment, harboured by William, was so inveterate, that he did not immediately correspond to this dutiful submission of his son with like tenderness, but giving him his malediction, departed for his own camp on Robert's horse, which that prince had assisted him to mount^O. He soon after raised the siege, and marched with his army to Normandy; where the interposition of the queen and other common friends brought about a reconciliation, which was probably not a little forwarded by the generosity of the son's behaviour in this action, and by the returning sense of his past misconduct. The king seemed so fully appeased, that he even carried over Robert with him into England; where he intrusted him with power to repel an inroad of Malcolm king of Scotland, and to retaliate by a like inroad into that country. The English prince was successful, and obliged the enemy to make submissions. The Welsh, unable to resist William's power, were, about the same time, necessitated to make satisfaction for their incursions^P; and every thing was reduced to a full tranquillity in this island.

THIS state of affairs gave William leisure to begin and finish an undertaking, which proves his extensive genius, and does honour to his memory: It was a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom, their extent in each district, their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, pasture, wood, and arable land, which they contained; and in some counties the number of tenants, cottagers, and slaves of all denominations, who lived upon them. He appointed commissioners for this purpose, who entered every particular in their register by the verdict of juries; and after a labour of six years (for the work was so long in finishing) brought him an exact account of all the landed property of his kingdom. 1081. Dome-day-book.

^N Malmesb. p. 106. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wrig. p. 639. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Diceto, p. 287. Knyghton, p. 2351. Alur. Beverl. p. 135. ^O H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. M. Paris, p. 7. Ypod. Neust. p. 439. ^P Chron. Sax. p. 184. M. West. p. 228.

CHAP. dom^Q. This monument, called Domesday-book, the most valuable piece of antiquity possessed by any nation, is still preserved in the Exchequer; and though only some extracts of it have hitherto been published, it serves to illustrate to us in many particulars the antient state of England. The great Alfreð had finished a like survey of the kingdom in his time, which was long kept at Winchester, and which probably served as a model to William in this undertaking^R.

IV.

1081.

THE king was naturally a great oeconomist; and though no prince had ever been so bountiful to his officers and servants, it was merely because he had rendered himself universal proprietor of England, and had a whole kingdom to bestow. He reserved a very ample revenue for the crown; and in the general distribution of land among his followers, he kept possession of no less than 1422 manors in different parts of England^S, which paid him rent either in money, or in corn, cattle, and the usual produce of the land. An antient historian, computes, that his annual fixed income, besides escheats, fines, reliefs, and other casual profits to a great value, amounted to near 400,000 pounds a-year^T; a sum, which, if all circumstances be attended to, will appear wholly incredible. A pound in that age, as we have before observed, contained three times the weight of silver that it does at present; and the same weight of silver, by the most probable computation, would purchase near ten times more of the necessaries of life, though not in the same proportion of the finer manufactures. This revenue, therefore, of William would be equivalent to at least nine or ten millions at present; and as that prince had neither fleet nor army to support, the former being only a casual expence, and the latter maintained, without any charge to him, by his military vassals, we must thence conclude, that no emperor

^Q Chron. Sax. p. 109. Ingulf, p. 79. Chron. T. Tykes, p. 23. H. Hunt. p. 370. Hoveden, p. 460. M. West. p. 229. Flor. Wigorn. p. 641. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 51. M. Paris. p. 8. The three northern counties, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Northumberland, were not comprehended in this survey; I suppose because of their wild, uncultivated situation.

^R Ingulf, p. 8. ^S West's Enquiry into the manner of creating Peers, p. 24. ^T Order. Vital. p. 523. He says 1060 pounds and some odd shillings and pence a-day.

emperor or prince, in any age or nation, was ever to be compared to the Conqueror in opulence and riches. This leads us to suspect a great mistake in the computation of the historian; though, if we consider that avarice is always imputed to William as one of his vices^U, and that having by the sword rendered himself master of all the lands in the kingdom, he would certainly in the partition retain a great proportion for his own share; we can scarce be guilty of any error in asserting, that no king of England was ever so opulent, was so able to support by his revenue the splendor and magnificence of a court, or could bestow so much on his pleasures or in liberalities to his servants and favourites^X.

THERE was one pleasure, to which William, as well as all the Normans, and antient Saxons, was extremely addicted; and that was hunting: But this pleasure he indulged more at the expence of his unhappy subjects, whose interests he always disregarded, than to the loss or diminution of his own revenue. Not contented with those large forests, which the former kings possessed in all parts of England; he resolved to make a new forest near Winchester, the usual place of his residence: And for that purpose, he laid waste the country in Hampshire for an extent of thirty miles, expelled the inhabitants from their houses, seized their property, even demolished churches and convents, and made the sufferers no compensation for the injury^Y. At the same time, he enacted new laws, by which he prohibited all his subjects from hunting in any of his forests, and rendered the penalties much more severe than ever had been inflicted for such offences. The killing of a deer or boar, or even of a hare, was punished with the loss of the delinquent's eyes^Z; and that at a time, when the killing of a man could be atoned for by paying a moderate fine or composition.

THE transactions, recorded during the remainder of this reign, may be considered more as domestic occurrences,
VOL. I. R which

^U Chron. Sax. p. 188, 191. Malmesb. p. 112. H. Hunt p. 370. M. West. p. 229. Brompton, p. 979. ^X Forestesque, de Dom. reg. & politic. cap. 111. ^Y Malmesb. p. 3. H. Hunt. p. 731. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258. ^Z Chron. Sax. p. 191. H. Hunt. p. 371. M. West. p. 229. Diceto, p. 488. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258.

CHAP. which concern the prince, than as national events, which
 IV. regard England. Odo, bishop of Baieux, the king's
 1082. uterine brother, whom he had created earl of Kent, and
 whom he had entrusted with a great share of power during
 his whole reign^A, had, amassed immense riches; and
 agreeably to the usual progress of human wishes, he be-
 gan to regard his present acquisitions but as a step to fa-
 ther grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of
 buying the papacy; and though Gregory, the present
 pope, was not of very advanced years, the prelate had
 confided so much in the predictions of an astrologer, that
 he made certain account of the pontiff's death, and of
 attaining, by his intrigues and money, that envied state
 of greatness^B. He resolved, therefore, to remit all his
 riches to Italy, and had persuaded many considerable
 barons, and among the rest, Hugh, earl of Chester, to
 take the same course; in hopes, that when he should
 mount the papal throne, he would bestow on them more
 considerable establishments in that country^C. The king,
 from whom all these projects had been carefully concealed
 at last got intelligence of the design, and ordered Odo
 to be arrested. His officers, from respect to the immu-
 nities, which the ecclesiastics now assumed, scrupled to
 execute the command, till the king himself was obliged
 in person to seize him; and when Odo insisted that he
 was a prelate, and exempt from all temporal jurisdiction,
 William replied, that he arrested him, not as bishop of
 Baieux, but as earl of Kent^D. He was sent prisoner in-
 to Normandy; and notwithstanding all the remonstrances
 and menaces of Gregory, was detained in custody during
 the remainder of this reign^E.

1083. ANOTHER domestic event gave the king much more
 concern: It was the death of Matilda, his consort, whom
 he tenderly loved, and for whom he had ever preserved
 the most sincere friendship. Three years afterwards he
 passed into Normandy, and carried with him Edgar
 Atheling, to whom he very willingly granted permission
 to

^A Order. Vital. p. 522. Frag. de. Gul. Conq. p. 29. ^B Or-
 der. Vital. p. 646. Frag. de Gul. Conq. p. 29. ^C Frag.
 de Gul. Conq. p. 29. ^D Chma. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo,
 p. 51. W. Malmes. p. 120. ^E Order. Vital. p. 647.
 H. Hunt. p. 379.

to make a pilgrimage into the holy land^F. He was detained on the continent by a misunderstanding, which broke out between him and the king of France, and which was occasioned by inroads made into Normandy by some French barons on the frontiers^G. It was little in the power of princes at that time to restrain their licentious nobility; but William suspected, that these barons dared not to have provoked his indignation, had they not been assured of the countenance and protection of Philip. His displeasure was increased by the account he received of some raileries which that monarch had thrown out against him. William, who was become corpulent, had been detained in bed some time by sickness; upon which Philip expressed his surprise that his brother of England should be so long of being delivered of his big belly. The king sent him word, that as soon as he was up, he would present so many lights at Notre-dame, as would perhaps give little pleasure to the king of France; alluding to the usual practice at that time of women after child-birth^H. Immediately on his recovery, he led an army into the L'Isle de France, and laid every thing waste with fire and sword: He took the town of Mante, which he reduced to ashes^I. But the progress of these hostilities was stopped by an accident, which soon after put an end to William's life. His horse starting aside of a sudden, he bruised his belly on the pommel of the saddle^K; and being in a bad habit of body, as well as somewhat advanced in years, he began to apprehend the consequences, and ordered himself to be carried in a litter to the monastery of St. Gervais. Finding his illness increase, and being sensible of the approach of death, he discovered at last the vanity of all human grandeur, and was struck with remorse for those horrible cruelties and violences, which in the attainment and defence of it, he had committed during the course of his reign over England^L. He endeavoured to make compensation by presents to churches and monasteries; and he issued orders for the liberty of earl Morcar,

R 2

Siward

^F W. Malmesb. p. 103.^G Order. Vital. p. 654, 655.^H Malmesb. p. 112. M. West. p. 230. M. Paris, p. 9. Brompton, p. 980. Knighton, p. 2353. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 262.^I Order. Vital. p. 655. Chron. de Mail. p. 161.^K Malmesb. p. 112. M. Paris, p. 10. Knighton, p. 2353.^L Frag. de Gul. Conq. p. 29, 30, 31.

CH A P. Siward Bearne, and other English prisoners ^M. He was

IV. even prevailed on, though not without reluctance, to consent, with his dying breath, to release his brother, Odo, against whom he was extremely incensed. He left Normandy and Maine to his eldest son, Robert: He wrote to Lanfranc, desiring him to crown William king of England ^N: He bequeathed to Henry nothing but the possessions of his mother, Matilda; but foretold, that he would one day surpass both his brothers in power and opulence ^O.

1087.

9th Sept.

He expired in the sixty-third year of his age, in the twenty-first year of his reign over England, and in the fifty-fourth of that over Normandy.

Death
and character of
William
the Conqueror.

Few princes have been more fortunate than this great monarch, or were better entitled to grandeur and prosperity, from the abilities and the vigour of mind which he displayed in all his conduct. His spirit was bold and enterprising, yet guided by prudence: His ambition, which was exorbitant, and lay little under the restraints of justice, and still less under those of humanity, ever submitted to the dictates of reason and sound policy. Born in an age when the minds of men were intractable and unacquainted with submission, he was yet able to direct them to his purposes; and partly from the ascendant of his vehement character, partly from art and dissimulation, to establish an unlimited authority. Though not insensible to generosity, he was hardened against compassion; and he seemed equally ostentatious and equally ambitious of show and parade in his clemency and in his severity. The maxims of his administration were austere; but might have been useful, had they been solely employed in preserving order in an established government ^P: They were ill calculated for softening the rigors, which, under the most gentle management, are inseparable from conquest. His attempt against England was the last great enterprise

^M Chron. de Mailr. p. 161. Hoveden, p. 460. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 52. Diceto, p. 488. ^N Gul. Gemet. p. 292. Order. Vital. p. 659. Chron. de Mailr. p. 161. Malmesb. p. 112. H. Hunt. p. 371. Hoveden, p. 460. M. West. p. 230. ^O Order. Vital. p. 659. Gul. Neubr. p. 357. Frag. de Gul. Conq. p. 32. ^P M. West. p. 230. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258.

enterprize of the kind, which, during the course of CHAP. seven hundred years, has fully succeeded in Europe; and the force of his genius broke through those limits, which IV. first the feudal institutions, then the refined policy of 1087. princes, have fixed to the several states of Christendom.

Though he rendered himself infinitely odious to his English subjects, he transmitted his power to his posterity, and the throne is still filled by his descendants: A proof, that the foundations which he laid were firm and solid, and that, amidst all his violences, while he seemed only to gratify the present passion, he had still an eye towards futurity.

SOME writers have been desirous of refusing to this prince the title of Conqueror, in the sense which that term commonly bears; and on pretence, that the word is sometimes in old books applied to such as make an acquisition of territory by any means, they are willing to reject William's title, by right of war, to the crown of England. It is needless to enter into a controversy, which, by the terms of it, must necessarily degenerate into a dispute of words. It suffices to say, that the duke of Normandy's first invasion of the island was hostile; that his subsequent administration was entirely supported by arms; that in the very frame of his laws he made a distinction between the Normans and English, to the advantage of the former^Q; that he acted in every thing as absolute master over the natives, whose interests and affections he totally disregarded; and that if there was an interval when he assumed the appearance of a legal magistrate, the period was very short, and was nothing but a temporary sacrifice, which he, as has been the case with most conquerors, was obliged to make of his inclination to his present policy. Scarce any of those revolutions, which both in history and in common language, have always been denominated conquests, appear equally violent, or have been attended with so sudden an alteration both of power and property. The Roman state, which spread its dominion over Europe, left the rights of individuals, in a great measure untouched; and those civilized conquerors, while they made their own country the seat of empire, found, that they could draw most advantage from the subjected provinces, by securing to the

^Q Hoveden, p. 600.

CHAP. IV. the natives the free enjoyment of their own laws and of their private possessions. The barbarians, who subdued the Roman empire, though they settled in the conquered countries, yet being accustomed to a rude uncultivated life, found a small part of the land sufficient to supply all their wants; and they were not tempted to seize extensive possessions, which they neither knew how to cultivate nor enjoy. But the Normans and other foreigners, who followed the standard of William, while they made the vanquished kingdom the seat of empire, were yet so far advanced in arts as to be acquainted with the advantages of a large property; and having totally subdued the natives, they pushed the rights of conquest (very extensive in the eyes of avarice and ambition, however narrow in those of reason) to the utmost extremity against them. Except the former conquest of England by the Saxons themselves, who were induced, by peculiar circumstances, to proceed even to the extermination of the natives, it would be difficult to find in all history a revolution more destructive, or attended with a more complete subjection of the antient inhabitants. Contumely seems even to have been wantonly added to oppression^R; and the natives were universally reduced to such a state of meanness and poverty, that the English name became a term of reproach; and several generations elapsed before one family of Saxon pedigree was raised to any considerable honour, or could so much as attain the rank of barons of the realm^S. These facts are so apparent from the whole tenor of the English history, that none would have been tempted to deny or elude them, were they not heated by the controversies of faction; while one party was absurdly afraid of those absurd consequences, which they saw the other party inclined to draw from this event. But it is evident, that the present rights and privileges of the people, who are a mixture of English and Normans, can

^R H. Hunt. p. 370. Brompton, p. 980. ^S So late as the reign of king Stephen, the earl of Albemarle, before the battle of the Standard, addressed the officers of his army in these terms: *Proceres Angliæ clarissimi, et genere Normanni*, &c. Brompton, p. 1026. See farther Abbas Rieuval. p. 339, &c. All the barons and military men of England still call themselves Normans.

can never be affected by a transaction, which passed seven hundred years ago; and as all antient authors^T, who lived nearest the time, and best knew the state of the country, unanimously speak of the Norman dominion as a conquest by war and arms, no reasonable man, from the fear of imaginary consequences, will ever be tempted to reject their concurring and undoubted testimony.

KING William had issue, besides his three sons, who survived him, five daughters, to wit, (1.) Cicily, first a nun in the monastery of Fescamp, afterward abbess in the ho'y Trinity at Caen, where she died in 1127. (2.) Constantia, married to Alan Fergant, earl of Britanny. She died without issue. (3.) Alice, contracted to Harold. (4.) Adela, married to Stephen, earl of Blois, by whom she had four sons, William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen; of whom the elder was neglected, on account of the imbecility of his understanding. (5.) Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the king of Gallicia. She died on her journey thither, before she joined her bridegroom.

CHAP.

^T Iagulf, p. 70. H. Hunt. p. 370, 372. M. West. p. 225. Gul. Neub. p. 357. Alured. Beverl. p. 124. De gest. Angl. p. 333. M. Paris, p. 4. Sim. Dun. p. 206. Brompton, p. 962, 980, 1161. Gervase Tilb. lib. 1. cap. 16. Textus Roffensis apud Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 197. Gul. Pict. p. 206. Ordericus Vitalis, p. 521, 666, 853. Epist. St. Thom. p. 801. Gul. Malmes. p. 52. 57. Knyghton, p. 2354. Eadmer, p. 110. Thom. Rudborne in Ang. Sacra, vol. 1. p. 248. Monach. Roff. in Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. p. 276. Girald. Cambr. in eadem, vol. ii. p. 413. Hist. Elyensis, p. 516. The words of this last historian, who is very antient, are remarkable, and worth transcribing. *Rex itaque factus Wilhelmus, quid in principes Anglorum, qui tantæ cladi superesse poterant, fecerit, dicere, cum nihil profus, omitto. Quid enim prodesset, si nec unum in toto regno de illis dicorem pristina potestate uti permissum, sed omnes aut in gravem paupertatis erumnam detrusos, aut embeccatos, patria pulsos, aut effoscos oculis, vel cæteris amputatis membris, opprobrium bantium fectos, aut certe miserrime afflictos, vita privatos. Simili modo utilitate carere existimo dicere quid in minorem populum, non solum ab eis, sed a suis actum sit, cum id dictu sciamus difficile, et ob immanem crudelitatem fortassis incredibile.*

C H A P. V.

WILLIAM RUFUS

*Accession of William Rufus—Conspiracy against the king
—Invasion of Normandy—The Crusades—Ac-
quisition of Normandy—Quarrel with Anselm, the
primate—Death—and character of William Rufus.*

CHAP.
V.

1087.
Accession
of Willi-
am Rufus.

WILLIAM, surnamed *Rufus* or the *Red*, from the colour of his hair, had no sooner procured his father's commendatory letter to Lanfranc, the primate, than he hastened to take measures for securing to himself the government of England. Sensible, that a deed so informal, and so little prepared, which violated Robert's right of primogeniture, might meet with great opposition, he trusted entirely for success to his own celerity; and having left St. Gervais, while William was breathing his last, he arrived in England, before intelligence of his father's death had reached that kingdom ^A. Pretending orders from the king, he secured the fortresses of Dover, Pevensey, and Hastings, whose situation rendered them of the greatest importance; and he got possession of his father's treasure at Winchester, amounting to the sum of sixty thousand pounds, by which he hoped to encrease and encourage his partizans ^B. The primate, whose rank and reputation in the kingdom gave him great authority, had been entrusted with the care of his education, and had conferred on him the honour of knighthood ^C; and being connected with him by these ties, and probably deeming his pretensions just, declared that he would pay a willing obedience to the last will of the Conqueror, his friend and benefactor. Having assembled some bishops and some of the principal nobility, he instantly proceeded to the ceremony of crowning the new king ^D; and by this dispatch endeavoured to prevent all faction and resistance. At the same time, Robert, who had been already ac-
know-

^A W. Malmesb. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10. ^B Chron. Sax. p. 192. Brompton, p. 983. ^C W. Malmesb. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10. Thom. Rudborne, p. 263. ^D Hoveden, p. 461.

knowledge successor to Normandy, took peaceable possession of that dutchy. CHAP. V.

BUT though this partition appeared to have been made without any violence or opposition, there remained in England many causes of discontent, which seemed to menace that kingdom with a sudden revolution. The Norman barons, who generally possessed large estates both in England and in their own country, were uneasy at the separation of these territories; and foresaw, that, as it would be impossible for them to preserve long their allegiance to two masters, they must necessarily resign either their antient property or their new acquisitions^E. Robert's title to the dutchy they esteemed incontestible; his claim to the kingdom plausible; and they all desired that this prince, who alone had any pretensions to unite these states, should be put in possession of both. A comparison also of the personal qualities of the two brothers, led them to give the preference to the elder. The duke was brave, open, sincere, generous; and even his predominant faults, his extreme indolence and facility, were not disagreeable to those haughty barons, who affected independence, and submitted with reluctance to a rigorous administration in their sovereign. The king, though equally brave, was violent, haughty, tyrannical; and seemed disposed to govern more by the fear than by the love of his people^F. Odo, bishop of Baieux, and Robert earl of Montaigne, maternal brothers of the Conqueror, envying the great credit of Lanfranc, which was increased by his late services, enforced all these motives with their partizans, and engaged them in a formal conspiracy to dethrone the king^G. They communicated their design to Eustace, count of Bologne, Roger earl of Shrewsbury and Arundel, Robert de Belesme, his eldest son, William bishop of Durham, Robert de Moubray, Roger Bigod, Hugh de Grentmesnil; and they easily procured the assent of these potent noblemen. The conspirators, retiring to their castles, hastened to put themselves in a military posture; and expecting to be soon supported by a powerful army from Normandy, they had already begun hostilities in many places^H.

THE

^E Order. Vitalis, p. 666. ^F W. Malmesb. p. 120. Order. Vitalis, p. 666. ^G Hoveden, p. 461. Sim. Dunelm. p. 214. Diceto, p. 489. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 193. Hoveden, p. 461. M. Paris, p. 10.

CHAP. THE king, sensible of his perilous situation, endeavoured to engage the affections of the native English ; and as that people were now so thoroughly subdued that they no longer aspired to the recovery of their antient liberties, and were contented with the prospect of some mitigation in the tyranny of the Norman princes, they zealously embraced William's cause, upon receiving some general promises of good treatment, and of enjoying the licence of hunting in the royal forests ¹. The king was soon in a situation of taking the field ; and as he knew the danger of delay, he suddenly marched into Kent ; where his uncles had already taken possession of the fortresses of Pevensey and Rochester. Both these places, he successively reduced by famine ; and though he was prevailed on by the earl of Chester, William de Warrenne, and Robert Fitz Hamon, who had embraced his cause, to spare the lives of the rebels, he confiscated all their estates, and banished them the kingdom ^u. This advantage rendered his negotiations more successful with Roger earl of Shrewsbury, whom he detached from the confederates ^x ; and as his powerful fleet, joined to the indolent conduct of Robert, prevented the arrival of the Norman succours ^y, all the other rebels found no resource but in flight or submission. Some of them received a pardon ; but the greater part were confiscated ; and the king bestowed their estates on the Norman barons, who had remained faithful to him ^z.

1089. WILLIAM, freed from the danger of this insurrection, took little care of fulfilling his promises to the English, who still found themselves exposed to the same oppressions, which they had undergone during the reign of the Conqueror, and which were rather augmented by the violent, impetuous temper of the present monarch. The death of Lanfranc, who had retained great influence over him, gave soon after a full career to his tyranny ; and all orders of men found reason to complain of an arbitrary and illegal administration ^a. Even the privileges of the church, held

¹ Chron. Sax. p. 194. W. Malmesb. p. 120. H. Hunt. p. 372. Hoveden, p. 461. Chron. W. Hemingford, p. 462. Sim. Dunelm. p. 414. Alur. Beverl. p. 137. ^u Chron. Sax. p. 195. Order. Vital. p. 668. ^x W. Malm. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10. ^y Chron. Sax. p. 194. W. Malm. p. 121. Annal. Waverl. p. 136. ^z H. Hunt. p. 372. W. Malm. p. 122, 123.

held very sacred in those ages, were a feeble rampart CHAP. V.
 against his usurpations^B. He seized the temporalities of
 all the vacant bishoprics and abbies; he delayed the ap-
 pointing of successors to those dignities, that he might
 the longer enjoy the profits of their revenue; he bestowed
 some of the church-lands in property on his captains and
 favourites; and he openly put to sale such sees and ab-
 bies as he thought proper to dispose of. Though the
 murmurs of the ecclesiastics, which were quickly propa-
 gated to the nation, rose high against this grievance, the
 terror of William's authority, confirmed by the suppres-
 sion of the late insurrections, retained every one in sub-
 jection, and preserved a general tranquillity in England. 1089.

THE king even thought himself enabled to disturb his 1090.
 brother in the possession of Normandy. The loose and negligent
 administration of that prince had emboldened of Nor-
 the Norman barons to affect a great independency; and
 their mutual quarrels and devastations had rendered that
 whole territory a scene of violence and outrage^C. Two
 of them, Walter and Odo, were bribed by William to
 deliver the fortresses of St. Valeri and Albemarle into his
 hands^D: Others soon after imitated the example; while
 Philip, king of France, who ought to have protected his
 vassal in the possession of his fief, was, after making some
 efforts in his favour, engaged by large presents to remain
 neuter^E. The duke had also reason to apprehend danger
 from the intrigues of his brother Henry. This young
 prince, who had inherited nothing of his father's great
 possessions but some of his money, had furnished Robert,
 while he was making his preparations against England,
 with the sum of three thousand marks; and in return for
 so slender a supply, had been put in possession of the
 Cotentin, which comprehended near a third of the duchy
 of Normandy^F. Robert afterwards upon some suspicion
 threw him into prison; but finding himself exposed to
 invasion from the king of England, and dreading the con-
 junction of the two brothers against him, he now gave
 Henry his liberty, and even made use of his assistance in
 suppress-

^B Eadmer, p. 14. M. Paris, p. 11. ^C Order. Vitalis, p. 672. ^D Chron. Sax. p. 196. W. Malmesb. p. 121. Hoveden, p. 462. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 196. W. Malm. p. 121. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 53. ^F T. Rudb. p. 263. W. Gemet. p. 293. Order. Vitalis, p. 665.

CHAP. suppressing the insurrections of his rebellious subjects.
 V. Conan, a rich burgher of Rouen, had entered into a conspiracy to deliver that city to William; but Henry, on the detection of his guilt, carried up the traitor to a high tower, and with his own hands flung him from the battlements^G.

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THE king appeared in Normandy at the head of an army; and affairs seemed to have come to extremity between the brothers; when the nobility on both sides, strongly connected by interest and alliances, interposed and procured an accommodation. The immediate advantage of this treaty accrued to William, who obtained possession of the territory of Eu, the towns of Aumale, Fescamp, and other places: But in return he promised, that he would assist his brother in subduing Maine, which had rebelled; and that the Norman barons, forfeited in Robert's cause, should be restored to their estates in England. The two brothers also stipulated, that on the demise of either without issue, the survivor should inherit all his dominions; and twelve of the most powerful barons on each side swore, that they would employ their power to insure the effectual execution of the whole treaty^H: A strong proof of the great independence and authority of the nobles in those ages!

PRINCE Henry, disgusted, that so little care had been taken of his interests in this accommodation, retired to St. Michael's Mount, a strong fortress on the coast of Normandy, and infested the neighbourhood with his incursions^I. Robert and William with their joint forces besieged him in this place, and had nearly reduced him by the scarcity of water; when the elder, hearing of his distress, granted him permission to supply himself, and also sent him some pipes of wine for his own table. Being reproved by William for this ill-timed generosity, he replied, *What! shall I suffer my brother to die of thirst? Where shall we find another, when he is gone^K?* The king also, during this siege, performed an act of generosity.

^G Order. Vital. p. 690. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 197. W. Malm. p. 121. Hoveden, p. 462. M. Paris, p. 11. Annal. Waverl. p. 137. W. Heming. p. 463. Sim. Dunelm. p. 216. Brompton, p. 986. ^I Chron. de Mail. p. 161. ^K W. Malm. p. 121. T. Rudborne, p. 264. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 53.

rosity, which was less suitable to his character. Riding out one day alone, to take a survey of the fortress, he was attacked by two soldiers, and dismounted. One of them drew his sword in order to dispatch him; when the king exclaimed, *Hold, knave! I am the king of England.* The soldier suspended his blow; and raising the king from the ground, with expressions of respect, received a handsome reward, and was taken into his service ^L. Prince Henry was soon after obliged to capitulate; and being despoiled of all his dominions, wandered about for some time with very few attendants, and often in great poverty.

THE continued intestine discord among the barons was alone in that age destructive: The public wars were commonly short and feeble, produced little bloodshed, and were attended with no memorable event. To this Norman war, which was so soon concluded, there succeeded hostilities with Scotland, which were of no longer duration. Robert here commanded his brother's army, and obliged Malcolm to accept of peace and to do homage to the crown of England ^M. This peace was not more durable. Malcolm, two years after, levying an army, invaded England; and after ravaging Northumberland, he laid siege to Alnwick, where a party of earl Mowbray's troops falling upon him by surprise, a sharp action ensued, in which Malcolm was slain ^N. This incident disappointed for some years the succession to the Scottish crown. Though Malcolm left legitimate sons, his brother, Donald, on account of the youth of those princes, was advanced to the throne; but kept not long possession of the royal dignity. Duncan, natural son of Malcolm, formed a conspiracy against him; and being assisted by William with a small force, made himself master of the kingdom ^O. New broils ensued with Normandy. The frank, open, remiss temper of Robert was ill fitted to withstand the interested, rapacious character of William, who, being supported by greater power, was still encroaching on his brother's possessions, and exciting his turbulent barons to rebel-

^L W. Malm. p. 121. T. Rudborne, p. 263. Knyghton, p. 2359. ^M Chron. Sax. p. 198. H. Hunt. p. 373. Hoveden, p. 462. Chron. de Mailr. p. 161. M. West. p. 232. ^N Chron. Sax. p. 199. Hoveden, p. 463. W. Heming. p. 464. ^O Chron. Sax. p. 199. Hoveden, p. 463.

- CHAP. V. rebellion against him ^P. The king, having gone over to Normandy to support his partizans, ordered an army of twenty thousand men to be levied in England, and to be conducted to the sea-coast, as if they were instantly to be embarked. Here Ralph Flambard, the king's minister, and the chief instrument of his extortions, exacted ten shillings a-piece from them, in lieu of their service, and then dismissed them into their several counties ^Q. This money was so skilfully employed by William, that it rendered him better service than he could have expected from the army. He engaged the French king by new presents ^R to depart from the protection of Robert; and he daily bribed the Norman barons to desert his service ^S: But was prevented from pushing his advantages against the duke, by an incursion of the Welsh, which obliged him to return into England ^T. He found no difficulty to repel the enemy; but was not able to make any considerable impression on a country, guarded by its mountainous situation. A conspiracy of his own barons, which was detected at this time, appeared a more serious concern, and engrossed all his attention. Robert Mowbray, earl of Northumberland, was at the head of this combination; and he engaged in it the count d'Eu, Richard de Tunbrige, Roger de Lacey, and many others. The purpose of the conspirators was to dethrone the king, and to advance in his stead, Stephen, count of Aumale, nephew to the Conqueror ^U. William's dispatch prevented the design from taking effect, and disconcerted the conspirators. Mowbray made some resistance; but being taken prisoner, was attainted, and thrown into confinement, where he died about thirty years after ^X. The count d'Eu denied his concurrence in the plot; and to justify himself, fought in the presence of the court at Windsor, a duel with Geoffrey Bainard, who accused him. But being worsted in the combat, he was condemned to be castrated, and to

^P M. Paris, p. 12. Annal. Waverl. p. 138. ^Q Chron. Sax. p. 201. H. Hunt. p. 373. M. Paris, p. 12. W. Heming. p. 465. Sim. Dunelm. p. 220. ^R Chron. Sax. p. 201. Annal. Waverl. p. 139. ^S Hoveden, p. 464. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 201. W. Heming. p. 465. ^U Hoveden, p. 465. Sim. Dun. p. 221. ^X Chron. Sax. p. 202, 203. W. Malmeſ. p. 124. H. Hunt. p. 373. Annal. Waverl. p. 139.

to have his eyes put out ^V. William de Alderi, another conspirator, was supposed to be treated with more rigor, when he was sentenced to be hanged ^Z. CHAP. V.

BUT the noise of these petty wars and commotions was quite sunk in the tumult of the Crusades, which now engrossed the attention of Europe, and have ever since employed the curiosity of mankind, as the most signal and most durable monument of human folly, that has yet appeared in any age or nation. After Mahomet had, by means of his pretended revelations, united the dispersed Arabians under one head, they issued forth from their deserts in great multitudes; and being animated with zeal for their new religion, and supported by the vigour of their new government, they made deep impression on the eastern empire, which was far in the decline, with regard both to military discipline and to civil policy. Jerusalem, by its situation, became one of their most early conquests; and the Christians had the mortification to see the holy sepulchre, and the other places, made famous by the presence of their religious founder, fallen into the possession of infidels. But the Arabians or Saracens were so employed in military enterprizes, by which they spread their empire, in a few years, from the banks of the Ganges to the Straits of Gibraltar, that they had no leisure for theological controversy; and though the Koran, the original monument of their faith, seems to contain some violent precepts, they were much less infected with the spirit of bigotry and persecution than the indolent and speculative Greeks, who were continually refining on the several articles of their religious system. They gave little disturbance to those zealous pilgrims, who daily flocked to Jerusalem; and they allowed every man, after paying a moderate tribute, to visit the holy sepulchre, to perform his religious duties, and to return in peace. But the Turcomans or Turks, a tribe of Tartars, who had embraced Mahometanism, having wrested Syria from the Saracens, and having in the year 1065, made themselves masters of Jerusalem, rendered the pilgrimage much more difficult and dangerous to the Christians. The barbarity of their manners, and the confusions attending their unsettled government, exposed the pilgrims to many insults,

^V W. Malm. p. 124. Hoveden, p. 466. ^Z Chron. Sax. p. 204.

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insults, robberies, and extortions; and these zealots, returning from their meritorious fatigues and sufferings, filled all Christendom with indignation against the infidels, who profaned the holy city by their pretence, and derided the sacred mysteries in the very place of their completion. Gregory VII. among the other vast ideas, which he entertained, had formed the design of uniting all the western Christians against the Mahometans; but his exorbitant enterprizes upon the civil power of princes, had created him so many enemies, and had rendered his schemes so suspicious, that he was not able to make great progress in this undertaking. The work was reserved for a meaner instrument, whose low condition exposed him to no jealousy, and whose folly was well calculated to coincide with the prevailing principles of the times.

PETER, commonly called the hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and being deeply affected with the dangers, to which that act of piety now exposed the pilgrims, as well as with the instances of oppression, under which the eastern Christians laboured, he entertained the bold, and, in all appearance, impracticable project of leading into Asia, from the farthest extremities of the west, armies sufficient to subdue those potent and warlike nations, which now held the holy land in slavery and subjection ^A. He proposed his views to Martin II. who filled the papal chair, and who, though he was sensible of the advantages, which the head of the Christian religion must reap from a religious war, and though he esteemed the blind zeal of Peter a proper means for effecting the purpose ^B, resolved not to interpose his authority, till he saw a greater probability of success. He summoned a council at Placentia, which consisted of four thousand ecclesiastics and thirty thousand seculars; and which was so numerous, that no hall could contain the multitude, and it was necessary to hold the assembly in a plain. The harangues of the pope, and of Peter himself, representing the dismal situation of their brethren in the east, and the indignity, suffered by the Christian name, in allowing the holy city to remain in the hands of infidels, here found the minds of men so well prepared, that the whole multitude, suddenly and vio-

^A Gul. Tyrius, lib. i. cap. 11. M. Paris, p. 17. ^B Gul. Tyrius, lib. i. cap. 13.

violently, declared for the war, and solemnly devoted themselves to perform this service, so meritorious, as they believed it, towards God and religion. CHAP. V.

BUT though Italy seemed thus to have embraced zealously the design, Martin justly thought, that, in order to insure success, it was necessary to enlist the greater and more warlike nations in the same engagement; and having previously exhorted Peter to visit the chief cities and sovereigns of Christendom, he summoned another council at Clermont in Auvergne^C. The fame of this great and pious design, being now universally diffused, procured the attendance of the greatest prelates, nobles, and princes; and when the pope and the hermit renewed their pathetic exhortations, the whole assembly, as if impelled by an immediate inspiration, not moved by their preceding impressions, exclaimed with one voice, *It is the will of God, It is the will of God*: Words deemed so memorable, and so much the result of a divine influence, that they were employed as the signal of rendezvous and battle in all the future exploits of these adventurers^D. Men of all ranks flew to arms with the utmost ardour; and an exterior symbol too, a circumstance of chief moment, was here chosen by the devoted combatants. The sign of the cross, which had been hitherto so much revered among Christians, and which, the more it was an object of reproach among infidels, was the more passionately cherished by them, became the badge of union, and was affixed to their right shoulder, by all who enlisted themselves in this sacred warfare^E.

EUROPE was at this time sunk into profound ignorance and superstition: The ecclesiastics had acquired the greatest ascendant over the human mind: The people, who, being little restrained by honour and less by law, abandoned themselves to the worst crimes and disorders, knew of no other expiation than the observances imposed on them by their spiritual pastors: And it was easy to represent the holy war as an equivalent for all penances^F, and an atonement for every violation of justice and humanity. But amidst the abject superstition, which now prevailed,

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^C Concil. tom. x. Concil. Clarom. Matth. Paris, p. 16.

M. West. p. 233. ^D Historia Belli Sacri, tom. i. Musæi

Ital. ^E Hist. Bell. Sacri, tom. i. Mus. Ital. Order. Vital.

p. 721. ^F Order. Vital. p. 720.

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the military spirit also had universally diffused itself; and though not supported by art or discipline, was become the general passion of the nations, governed by the feudal law. All the great lords possessed the right of peace and war: They were engaged in continual hostilities with each other: The open country was become a scene of outrage and disorder: The cities, still mean and poor, were neither guarded by walls, nor protected by privileges, and were exposed to each insult: Every man was obliged to depend for safety on his own force, or his private alliances: And valour was the only excellence, which was held in esteem, or gave one man the pre-eminence above another. When all the particular superstitions, therefore, were here united in one great object, the ardour for private hostilities took the same direction; and Europe, impelled by its two ruling passions, was loosened, as it were, from its foundations, and seemed to precipitate itself in one united body upon the east.

ALL orders of men, deeming the crusades the only road to heaven, enlisted themselves under these sacred banners, and were impatient to open the way with their sword to the holy city. Nobles, artizans, peasants, even priests^o inrolled their names; and to decline this meritorious service was branded with the reproach of impiety, or what perhaps was esteemed still more disgraceful, of cowardice and pusillanimityⁿ. The infirm and aged contributed to the expedition by presents and money; and many of them, not satisfied with the merit of this atonement, attended it in person, and were determined, if possible, to breathe their last, in sight of that city where their Saviour had died for them. Women themselves, concealing their sex under the disguise of armour, attended the camp; and commonly forgot still more the duty of their sex, by prostituting themselves without reserve, to the armyⁱ. The greatest criminals were forward in a service, which they regarded as a propitiation for all crimes; and the most enormous disorders were, during the course of these expeditions, committed by men enured to wickedness, encouraged by example, and impelled by necessity. The multitude of the adven-

^o Order. Vital. p. 720. ⁿ W. Malm. p. 133.

Hist. de Chev. de Malte, vol. i. p. 46.

ⁱ Vertot.

adventurers soon became so great, that their more sagacious leaders, Hugh count de Vermandois, brother to the French king, Raymond count of Thoulouse, Godfrey of Bouillon, prince of Brabant, and Stephen count of Blois^K, became apprehensive lest the greatness of the armament itself would disappoint its purpose; and they permitted an undisciplined multitude, computed at 300,000 men, to go before them, under the command of Peter the hermit, and Walter the moneyless^L. These men took the road towards Constantinople through Hungary and Bulgaria; and trusting, that heaven, by supernatural assistance, would supply all their necessities, they made no provision for subsistence on their march. They soon found themselves obliged to obtain by plunder what they had vainly expected from miracles; and the enraged inhabitants of the countries through which they passed, gathering together in arms, attacked the disorderly multitude, and put them to slaughter without resistance. The more disciplined armies followed after; and passing the straits at Constantinople, they were mustered in the plains of Asia, and amounted in the whole to the number of 700,000 combatants^M.

AMIDST this universal frenzy, which spread itself by contagion throughout Europe, especially in France and Germany, men were not entirely forgetful of their present interests; and both those who went on this expedition, and those who staid behind, entertained schemes of gratifying, by its means, their avarice or their ambition. The nobles who insisted themselves were moved, from the romantic spirit of the age, to hope for opulent establishments in the east, the chief seat of arts and commerce during those ages; and in pursuit of these chimerical projects, they sold at the lowest price their antient castles and inheritances, which had now lost all value in their eyes. The greater princes, who remained at home, besides establishing peace in their dominions by giving occupation abroad to the inquietude and martial disposition of their subjects, took the opportunity of annexing to their crown many considerable fiefs, either by purchase or by the extinction of the heirs. The pope frequently turned the zeal of the crusades from the infidels

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against

^K Sim. Duchm. p. 222. ^L Matth. Paris, p. 17. ^M *ibid.* p. 20, 21.

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against his own enemies, whom he represented as equally criminal with the enemies of Christ. The convents and other religious societies bought the possessions of the adventurers; and as the contributions of the faithful were commonly entrusted to their management, they often diverted to this purpose what was intended to be employed against the infidels^N. But no one was a more immediate gainer by this epidemic fury than the king of England, who kept aloof from all connexions with those fanatical and romantic warriors.

Acquisition of Normandy.

ROBERT, duke of Normandy, impelled by the bravery and mistaken generosity of his spirit, had early lifted himself in the crusade; but being always unprovided of money, he found, that it would be impracticable for him to appear, in a manner suitable to his rank and station, at the head of his numerous vassals and subjects, who, transported with the general rage, were determined to follow him into Asia. He resolved, therefore, to mortgage, or rather to sell his dominions, which he had no talents to govern; and he offered them to his brother William for no greater sum than ten thousand marks^O. The bargain was soon concluded: The king raised the money by violent extortions on his subjects of all ranks, even on the convents, who were obliged to melt their plate in order to furnish the quota demanded of them^P: He was put in possession of Normandy and Maine: And Robert, providing himself of a magnificent train, set out for the holy land, in pursuit of glory, and in full confidence of securing his eternal salvation.

THE smallness of this sum, with the difficulties which William found in raising it, suffices alone to refute the account, which is heedlessly adopted by historians, of the enormous revenue of the Conqueror. Is it credible, that Robert would consign into the rapacious hands of his brother such considerable dominions, for a sum, which, according to that account, made not a week's income of his father's English revenue alone? Or that the king of England could not on demand, without oppressing his subjects, have

^N Padre Paolo Hist. delle benef. ecclesiast. p. 128. ^O W. Malm. p. 123. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 24. Annal. Waverl. p. 139. W. Heming. p. 467. Flor. Wig. p. 648. Sim. Dunelm. p. 222. Knyghton, p. 2364. ^P Eadmer, p. 35. W. Malm. p. 123. W. Heming. p. 467.

have been able to pay him the money? The Conqueror, it is agreed, was frugal as well as rapacious; yet his treasure, at his death, exceeded not 60,000 pounds, which would scarce have been his income for two months: Another certain refutation of that exaggerated account.

THE fury of the crusades, during this age, less infected England than the neighbouring kingdoms; probably because the Norman conquerors, finding their settlement in that kingdom still somewhat precarious, dared not to abandon their own houses, in quest of distant adventures. The selfish interested humour also of the king, which kept him from kindling in the general flame, checked its progress among his subjects; and as he is accused of open profaneness ^Q, and was endowed with a sharp wit ^R, it is likely that he made the romantic chivalry of the crusades the object of his perpetual raillery. As an instance of his irreligion, we are told, that he once accepted of sixty marks from a Jew, whose eldest son had been converted to Christianity, and who engaged him by that present to assist him in bringing back the youth to Judaism. William employed both menaces and persuasion to that purpose; but finding the new convert obstinate in his faith, he sent for the father, and told him, that as he had not succeeded, it was not just that he should keep the present; but as he had done his utmost, it was but equitable that he should be paid for his pains; and he would therefore only retain thirty marks of the money ^S. At another time, it is said, he sent for some learned Christian theologians and some rabbies, and bade them fairly dispute the question of their religion in his presence: He was perfectly indifferent between them, had his ears open to reason and conviction, and would embrace that doctrine, which upon comparison should be found supported by the most solid arguments ^T. If this story be true, it is probable that he meant only to amuse himself by turning both into ridicule; But we must be cautious of admitting every thing related by the monkish historians to the disadvantage of this prince: He had the misfortune to be engaged in quarrels with the ecclesiastics, particularly with Anselm, commonly called St. Anselm, arch-

^Q G. Neubr. p. 358. W. Gemet. p. 292. ^R W. Malm. p. 122. ^S Eadmer, p. 47. ^T W. Malm. p. 123.

CHAP. V. archbishop of Canterbury; and it is no wonder his memory should be blackened by the historians of that order.

1096. **Quarrel with Anselm, the primate.** AFTER the death of Lanfranc, the king, for several years, retained in his own hands the revenues of Canterbury, as he did those of many other vacant bishoprics; but falling into a dangerous illness, he was seized with remorse, and the clergy represented to him, that he was in danger of eternal perdition, if before his death he did not make atonement for those multiplied impieties and sacrileges, of which he had been guilty ^U. He resolved therefore to supply instantly the vacancy of Canterbury; and for that purpose he sent for Anselm, a Piedmontese by birth, abbot of Bec in Normandy, who was much celebrated for his learning and devotion. The abbot refused earnestly the dignity, fell on his knees, wept, and entreated the king to change his purpose ^X; and when he found the prince obstinate in forcing the pastoral staff upon him, he kept his fist so fast clenched, that it required the utmost violence of the byestanders to open it, and force him to receive that ensign of spiritual dignity ^Y. William soon after recovered his health; and his passions regaining their usual force and vigour, he returned to his former violence and rapine ^Z. He detained in prison several persons whom he had ordered to be freed during the time of his penitence; he still preyed upon the ecclesiastical benefices; the sale of spiritual dignities continued as open as ever; and he kept possession of a considerable part of the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury ^A. But he found in Anselm that persevering opposition, which he had reason to expect from the ostentatious humility, which that prelate had displayed in refusing his promotion.

THE opposition of Anselm was the more dangerous on account of the character of piety, which he soon acquired in England, by his great zeal against all abuses, particularly those in dress and ornament. There was a mode,

^U Eadmer, p. 16. Chron. Sax. p. 198. H. Hunt. p. 373. Hoveden, p. 463. M. Paris, p. 12. Annal. Waverl. p. 138. T. Rudb. p. 264. Flor. Wigorn. p. 645. Sim. Duneilm. p. 217. Diceto, p. 490. ^X Eadmer, p. 17. Diceto, p. 494. ^Y Eadmer, p. 18. ^Z H. Hunt. p. 373. M. Paris, p. 12. Diceto, p. 494. ^A Eadmer, p. 19. Chron. Sax. p. 199.

a mode, which, in that age, prevailed throughout Europe, both among men and women, to give an enormous length to their shoes, to draw the toe to a sharp point, and to affix to it the figure of a bird's bill, or some such ornament, which was turned upwards, and which was often sustained by gold or silver chains tied to the knee^B. The ecclesiastics took exception at this ornament, which, they said, was an attempt to bely the Scripture, where it is affirmed, that no man can add a cubit to his stature; and they declaimed against it with great vehemence, nay assembled some synods, who absolutely condemned it. But such are the strange contradictions in human nature! though the clergy, at that time, could overturn thrones, and had authority sufficient to send above a million of men on *their* errand to the deserts of Asia, they could never prevail against these long-pointed shoes: On the contrary, that caprice, contrary to all other modes, maintained its ground during several centuries; and if the clergy had not at last desisted from their persecutions of it, it might still have been the prevailing fashion in Europe.

BUT Anselm was more fortunate in decrying the particular mode, which was the object of his aversion, and which probably had not taken such fast hold of the affections of the people. He preached zealously against the long hair and curled locks, which were then fashionable among the courtiers; he refused the ashes on Ash-Wednesday to those who were so accoutered; and his authority and eloquence had such influence, that the young men universally abandoned that ornament, and appeared in the cropt hair, which was recommended to them by the sermons of the primate. The noted historians of Anselm, who was also his companion and secretary, celebrates highly this effort of his zeal and piety^C.

WHEN William's profaneness therefore returned to him with his health, he was soon engaged in controversies with this austere prelate. There was at that time a schism in the church, between Urban and Clement, who both pretended to the papacy^D; and Anselm, who, as abbot of Bec, had already acknowledged the former, was determined, without the king's consent, to introduce his authority

^B Order. Vital. p. 682. W. Malmesb. p. 123. Knyghton, p. 2369. ^C Eadmer, p. 23. ^D Hoveden, p. 463.

CHAP. V. authority into England^B. William, who, imitating his father's example, had prohibited his subjects from recognizing any pope, whom he had not previously received, was enraged at this pretension; and summoned a synod at Rockingham, with an intention of deposing Anselm; but the prelate's suffragans declared, that, without the papal authority, they knew of no expedient for inflicting that punishment on their primate^F. The king was at last engaged by other motives to give the preference to Urban's title; Anselm received the pall from that pontiff; and matters seemed to be tolerably well composed between the king and the primate^G, when the quarrel broke out afresh from a new cause. William had undertaken an expedition against Wales, and required the archbishop to furnish his quota of soldiers for that service; but Anselm, who regarded the demand as an oppression on the church, and yet durst not refuse compliance, sent them so miserably accoutered, that the king was extremely displeased, and threatened him with a prosecution^H. Anselm, on the other hand, demanded positively, that all the revenues of his see should be restored to him; appealed to Rome against the king's injustice^I; and affairs came to such extremities, that the primate, finding it dangerous to remain in the kingdom, desired and obtained the king's permission to retire beyond sea. All his temporalities were confiscated^K; but he was received with great respect by Urban, who considered him as a martyr in the cause of religion, and even menaced the king, on account of his proceedings against the primate and the church, with the sentence of excommunication. Anselm assisted at the council of Bari, where, besides fixing the controversy between the Greek and Latin churches, about the procession of the Holy Ghost^L, the right of election to church preferments was declared to belong to the clergy alone, and spiritual censures were denounced against all ecclesiastics, who did homage to laymen for their sees or benefices, and on all laymen who exacted it.

^B Eadmer, p. 25. M. Paris, p. 13. Diceto, p. 494.
^F Eadmer, p. 30. ^G Diceto, Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 16.
^H Eadmer, p. 37, 43. ^I Eadmer, p. 40.
^K M. Paris, p. 13. Parker, p. 178. ^L Eadmer, p. 49.
 M. Paris, p. 13. Sim. Dun, p. 224.

it^M. The rite of homage, by the feudal customs, was, that the vassal should throw himself on his knees, should put his joined hands between those of his superior, and should in that posture swear fealty to him^N. But the council declared it execrable, that pure hands, which could create God, and could offer him up as a sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, should be put, after this humiliating manner, between profane hands, which, besides being inured to rapine and bloodshed, were employed day and night in impure purposes and obscene contacts^O. Such were the reasonings prevalent in that age; reasonings, which, though they cannot be passed over in silence, without omitting the most curious and, perhaps, not the least instructive part of history, can scarce be delivered with the requisite decency and gravity.

THE cession of Normandy and Maine by duke Robert increased mightily the king's territories; but brought him no great increase of power, because of the unsettled state of these countries, the mutinous disposition of the barons, and the near neighbourhood of the French king, who supported them in all their insurrections. Even Helie, lord of la Fleche, a small town in Anjou, was able to give him inquietude; and this great monarch was obliged to make several expeditions abroad, without being able to prevail over so petty a baron, who had acquired the confidence and affections of the inhabitants of Maine. He was, however, so fortunate, as at last to take him prisoner in a rencounter; but having released him, at the intercession of the French king and the count d'Anjou, he found the province of Maine still exposed to his intrigues and incursions. Helie, being introduced by the citizens into the town of Mans, besieged the garrison in the citadel; and William, who was hunting in the new forest, when he received this intelligence, was so provoked, that he immediately turned about his horse, and galloped to the sea-shore at Dartmouth; declaring that he would not stop a moment till he had taken vengeance of this offence. He found the weather so cloudy and tempestuous, that the mariners pronounced it dangerous to put to sea; but the king hurried on board, and ordered them to set sail instantly;

^M M Paris, p. 14. ^N Spelman, Du Cange, in verb. *Hominium*. ^O W. Heming p. 467. Flor. Wigorn. p. 649. Sim. Dunelm. p. 224. Brompton, p. 994.

CHAP. ly; telling them, that they never yet heard of a king
 V. that was drowned ^P. By this vigour and celerity, he delivered the citadel of Mans from its present danger; and
 1099. pursuing Helie into his own territories, he laid siege to Majol, a small castle in those parts: But a wound, which
 1100. he received in the assault, obliged him to raise the siege; and he returned to England.

THE weakness of the greatest monarchs, during this age, in their military expeditions against their nearest neighbours, appears the more surprizing, when we consider the prodigious numbers, which even petty princes, seconding the enthusiastic rage of the people, were able to assemble, and to conduct in dangerous enterprizes to the remote provinces of Asia. William, earl of Poitiers and duke of Guienne, enflamed with the glory, and not discouraged by the misfortunes, which had attended the former adventurers in the crusades, had put himself at the head of an immense multitude, computed by some historians to amount to 60,000 horse, and a much greater number of foot ^Q, and he proposed to lead them into the holy land against the infidels. He wanted money to forward the preparations requisite for this expedition, and he offered to mortgage all his dominions to William, without entertaining any scruple on account of that rapacious and iniquitous hand, into which he resolved to consign them ^R. The king accepted his offer; and had prepared a fleet, and an army, in order to escort the money, and take possession of the rich provinces of Guienne and Poictou; when an accident put an end to his life, and to all his ambitious projects. He was engaged in hunting, the sole amusement, and indeed the chief-occupation of princes in those rude times, when society was little cultivated, and the arts afforded few objects worthy of attention. Walter Tyrrel, a French gentleman, remarkable for his address in archery, attended him in this recreation, of which the new forest was the scene; and as William had dismounted after a chase, Tyrrel, impatient to shew his dexterity, let fly an arrow at a stag, which suddenly started before him. The arrow, glancing from
 a tree,

2d August.

^P W. Malm. p. 124. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris, p. 36. Ypod. Neust. p. 442. ^Q W. Malm. p. 149. The whole is said by Order. Vital. p. 789, to amount to 300,000 men. ^R W. Malmesb. p. 127.

a tree, struck the king in the breast, and instantly slew **CHAP.**
him^s; while Tyrrel, without informing any one of the **V.**
accident, put spurs to his horse, hastened to the sea-shore,
embarked for France, and joined the crusade in an expe-
dition to Jerusalem; a penance which he imposed on
himself for this involuntary crime. The body of Wil-
liam was found in the forest by the country-people, and
was buried without any pomp or ceremony, at Winchester.
His courtiers were negligent in performing the last duties
to a master who was so little beloved; and every one was
too much occupied in the interesting object of fixing his
successor, to attend the funerals of a dead sovereign. **1100. Death.**

THE memory of this monarch is transmitted to us with
little advantage by the churchmen, whom he had offend-
ed; and though we may suspect in general, that their ac-
count of his vices is somewhat exaggerated, his conduct
affords little reason for contradicting the character which
they have assigned him, or for attributing to him any
very estimable qualities. He seems to have been a vio-
lent and tyrannical prince; a perfidious, encroaching,
and dangerous neighbour; an unkind and ungenerous re-
lation. He was equally prodigal and rapacious in the
management of his treasury; and if he possessed abilities,
he lay so much under the government of impetuous pas-
sions, that he made little use of them in his administra-
tion; and he indulged entirely that domineering policy,
which suited his temper, and which, if supported, as it
was in him, with courage and vigour, proves often more
successful, in disorderly times, than the deepest foresight
and most refined artifice.

THE monuments which remain of this prince in Eng-
land are the Tower, Westminster-hall, and London-
bridge, which he built. The most laudable foreign en-
terprize which he undertook, was the sending Edgar
Atheling, three years before his death into Scotland with
a small army, to restore prince Edgar the true heir of
that kingdom, son of Malcolm, and of Margaret, sister
of Edgar Atheling; and the enterprize proved success-
ful^T. It was remarked in that age, that Richard, an
elder

^s W. Malm. p. 126. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris. p. 37.
Peter. Bles. p. 110. ^T Chron. Sax. p. 206. W. Malm. p.
122. Hoveden, p. 466. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo,
p. 56.

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elder brother of William, perished by an accident in the new forest; Richard, his nephew, natural son of duke Robert, lost his life in the same place after the same manner: And all men, upon the king's fate, exclaimed, that, as the Conqueror had been guilty of extreme violence, in expelling all the inhabitants of that large district, to make room for his game, the just vengeance of heaven was signalized, in the same place, by the slaughter of his posterity^F. William was killed in the thirteenth year of his reign, and about the fortieth of his age^G. As he was never married, he left no legitimate issue behind him.

In the eleventh year of his reign, Magnus, king of Norway^H, made a descent on the isle of Anglesea; but was repulsed by Hugh earl of Shrewsbury^H. This is the last attempt made by the northern nations against England.

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^F Hoveden, p. 468. Flor. Wig. p. 649. W. Gemet. p. 296. Sim. Dunelm. p. 225. Brompton, p. 996. ^G W. Malm. p. 127. ^H Sim. Dunelm. p. 223.

C H A P. VI.

H E N R Y I.

The crusades—Accession of Henry—Marriage of the king—Invasion by duke Robert—Accommodation with Robert—Attack of Normandy—Conquest of Normandy—Continuation of the quarrel with Anselm, the primate—Compromise with him—Wars abroad—Death of prince William—King's second marriage—Death—and character of Henry.

AFTER the adventurers in the holy war were assembled on the banks of the Bosphorus, opposite to Constantinople, they proceeded on their enterprize; but immediately experienced those difficulties, which their zeal had hitherto concealed from them, and for which, even if they had foreseen them, it would have been almost impossible to provide a proper remedy. The Greek emperor, Alexis Comnenus, who had applied to the western Christians for succour against the Turks, entertained hopes, and those but feeble ones, of obtaining such a moderate supply, as, acting under his command, might enable him to repulse the enemy: But he was extremely astonished to see his dominions overwhelmed, on a sudden, with such an inundation of licentious barbarians, who, though they pretended friendship, despised his subjects as unwarlike, and detested them as heretical. By all the arts of policy, in which he excelled, he endeavoured to divert the torrent; but while he employed professions, caresses, civilities, and seeming services towards the leaders of the crusade, he secretly regarded those imperious allies as more dangerous than the open enemies, by whom his empire had been formerly invaded. Having effectuated that difficult point of disembarking them safely in Asia, he entered into a private correspondence with Soliman emperor of the Turks; and practised every insidious art, which his genius, his power, or his situation enabled him to employ, for disappointing the enterprize, and discouraging the Latins from making thenceforward any such prodigious migrations. His dangerous policy was seconded by the disorders, inseparable from so vast a multitude, who were not united under one head, and were

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The crusades.

CHAP. were conducted by leaders of the most independent, intractable spirit, unacquainted with military discipline, and still more enemies to civil authority and submission. The

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1100. The scarcity of provisions, the excesses of fatigue, the influence of unknown climates, joined to the want of concert in their operations, and to the sword of a warlike enemy, destroyed the adventurers, by thousands, and would have abated the ardour of men, impelled to war by less powerful motives. Their zeal, however, their bravery, and their irresistible force still carried them forward, and continually advanced them to the great end of their enterprizes. After an obstinate siege, they took Nice, the seat of the Turkish empire; they defeated Soliman in two great battles; they made themselves masters of Antioch; and entirely broke the force of the Turks, who had so long retained these countries in subjection. The soldan of Egypt, whose alliance they had hitherto courted, recovered, on the fall of the Turkish power, his former authority in Jerusalem; and informed them by his ambassadors, that, if they came disarmed to that city, they might now perform their religious vows, and that all Christian pilgrims, who should thenceforth visit the holy sepulchre, might expect the same good treatment, which they had ever received from his predecessors. The offer was rejected; the soldan was required to yield up the city to the Christians; and on his refusal, the champions of the cross advanced to the siege of Jerusalem, which they regarded as the consummation of their labours. By the detachments, which they had made, and the disasters, which they had undergone, they were diminished, to the number of twenty thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse; but these were still formidable, from their valour, their experience, and the obedience, which, at the price of past calamities, they had learned to pay to their leaders. After a siege of five weeks, they took Jerusalem by assault; and, impelled by a mixture of military and religious rage, they put the numerous garrison and inhabitants to the sword without distinction. Neither arms defended the valiant, nor submission the timorous: No age nor sex was spared: Infants on the breast were pierced by the same blow with their mothers, who implored for mercy: Even a multitude, to the number of ten thousand persons, who had surrendered themselves prisoners, and were promised quarters, were butchered

butchered in cool blood by these ferocious conquerors¹. The streets of Jerusalem were covered with dead bodies^K; and the triumphant warriors, after every enemy was subdued and slaughtered, immediately turned themselves, with the sentiments of humiliation and contrition, towards the holy sepulchre. They threw aside their arms, still streaming with blood: They advanced with reclined bodies, and naked feet and head to that sacred monument: They sung anthems to their Saviour who had purchased their salvation by his death and agony: And their devotion, enlivened by the presence of the place where he had suffered, so overcame their fury, that they dissolved in tears, and bore the appearance of every soft and tender sentiment^L. So inconsistent is human nature with itself! And so easily does the most effeminate superstition ally both with the most heroic courage, and with the fiercest barbarity!

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THIS great event happened on the fifth of July in the last year of the eleventh century. The Christian princes and nobles, after chusing Godfrey of Bouillon king of Jerusalem, began to settle themselves in their new conquests; while some of them returned to Europe, in order to enjoy at home that glory which their valour had acquired them in this popular and meritorious enterprize. Among these, was Robert, duke of Normandy, who, as he had abandoned the greatest dominions of any prince, that attended the crusade, had all along distinguished himself by the most interpid courage^M, as well as by that affable disposition and unbounded generosity, which gain the hearts of soldiers, and qualify a prince to shine in a military life. In passing through Italy, he became acquainted with Sibylla, daughter of the count of Conversana, a young lady of great beauty and merit, whom he espoused^N; and indulging himself in this new passion, as well as fond of enjoying ease and pleasure, after the fatigues of so many rough campaigns, he lingered a twelvemonth in that delicious climate; and though his friends in the north looked every moment for his arrival,

none

¹ Vertot, vol. i. p. 57. ^K M. Paris, p. 34. Order. Vital. p. 756. Diceto, p. 498. ^L M. Paris, p. 34. Order. Vital. p. 756. ^M M. Paris, p. 35. W. Heming. p. 467. G. Newbrig. p. 358. ^N W. Malm. p. 153. Gul. Gemet. p. 299.

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none of them knew when they could with certainty expect it. By this delay, he lost the kingdom of England, which the great fame he had acquired during the crusades, as well as his undoubted title, both by birth, and by the preceding agreement with his deceased brother, would, had he been present, have, infallibly secured to him.

Accession
of Henry.

PRINCE Henry was hunting with Rufus in the new forest, when intelligence of that prince's death was brought him; and being sensible of the advantage, attending the conjuncture, he hurried to Winchester, in order to secure the royal treasure, which he knew to be a necessary implement for facilitating his designs on the crown. He had scarcely reached the place when William de Breteuil, keeper of the treasure, arrived, and opposed himself to Henry's pretensions. This nobleman, who had been engaged in the same party of hunting, had no sooner heard of his master's death, than he hastened to take care of his charge; and he told the prince, that this treasure, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, who was now his sovereign; and that he himself, for his part, was determined, in spite of all other pretensions, to maintain his allegiance to him. But Henry drawing his sword, threatened him with instant death, if he dared to disobey him; and as others of the late king's retinue, who came every moment to Winchester, joined the prince's party, Breteuil was obliged to withdraw his opposition, and to acquiesce in this violence^o.

HENRY, without losing a moment, hastened with his money to London; and having assembled some noblemen and prelates, whom his address, or abilities, or presents, gained to his side, he was suddenly elected, or rather saluted king; and immediately proceeded to the exercise of the royal dignity. In less than three days after his brother's death, the ceremonial of his coronation was performed by Maurice, bishop of London, who was persuaded to officiate on that occasion^p; and thus, by his courage and celerity, he intruded himself into the vacant throne. No one had sufficient spirit or sense of duty to appear in defence of the absent prince: All men were seduced or intimidated: Present possession supplied the apparent

^o Order. Vital. p. 782.
Vital. p. 783.

^p Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order.

parent deficiencies of Henry's title, which was indeed founded on plain usurpation: And the barons, as well as the people, acquiesced in a claim, which, though it could neither be justified or comprehended, could now, they found, be opposed only through the perils of civil war and rebellion.

BUT as Henry easily foresaw, that a crown, usurped against all rules of justice, would sit very unsteady on his head, he resolved, by fair professions at least, to gain the affections of all his subjects. Besides taking the usual coronation-oath to maintain the laws and execute justice, he passed a charter, which was calculated to remedy many of the grievous oppressions, which had been complained of during the reigns of his father and brother. He there promised, that, at the death of any bishop or abbot, he never would seize the revenues of the see or abbey during the vacancy, but would leave the whole to be reaped by the successor; and that he would never let to farm any ecclesiastical benefice, nor dispose of it for money. After this concession to the church, whose favour was of so great consequence, he proceeded to enumerate the civil grievances, which he purposed to redress. He promised, that upon the death of any earl, baron, or military tenant, his heir should be admitted to the possession of his estate, on paying a just and lawful relief; without being exposed to such exorbitant exactions as had been required during the late reigns: He remitted the wardship of minors, and allowed guardians to be appointed, who should be answerable for the trust: He promised not to dispose of any heiress in marriage, but by the advice of all the barons; and if any baron intended to give his daughter, sister, niece, or kinswoman, in marriage, it should only be necessary for him to consult the king, who promised to take no money for his consent, nor ever to refuse permission, unless the person, to whom it was proposed to marry her, should happen to be his enemy: He granted his barons and military tenants the power of bequeathing by will their money or personal estates; and if they neglected to make a will, he promised, that their heirs should succeed to them: He renounced the right of imposing moneyage, and of levying taxes at pleasure on the farms, which the barons retained

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in

Q Chron. Sax. p. 208. Sim. Dunelm. p. 225. Brompton, p. 997.

CHAP. in their own hands^R: He made some general professions
 VI of moderating fines; he offered a pardon for all offences; and he remitted all debts due to the crown: He required,
 1100. that the vassals of the barons should enjoy the same privileges, which he granted to his own barons; and he promised a general confirmation and observance of the laws of king Edward. This is the substance of the chief articles contained in that famous charter^S.

To give greater authenticity to these concessions, Henry lodged a copy of his charter in some abbey of each county; as if desirous, that it should be exposed to the view of all his subjects, and remain as a perpetual rule for the limitation and direction of his government: Yet is it certain, that, after the present turn was served, he never once thought, during his reign, of observing one single article of it; and the whole fell so much into neglect and oblivion, that in the following century, when the barons, who had heard an obscure tradition of it desired to make it the model of the great charter, which they exacted from king John, they could only find one copy of it in the kingdom. But as to the grievances here proposed to be redressed, they were still continued in their full extent; and the royal authority, in all these heads, lay under no manner of restriction. Reliefs of heirs, so capital an article, were never effectually fixed till the time of Magna Charta^T; and it is evident, that the general promise here given, of accepting a just and reasonable relief, ought to have been reduced to more precision, in order to give security to the subject. The oppression of wardship and marriage was perpetuated even till the age of Charles II: And it appears from Glanville^U, the famous justiciary of Henry II. that in his time,

^R See Appendix II. ^S Matth. Paris, p. 38. Hoveden, p. 468. Brompton, p. 1021. Hagulfstad, p. 310.

^T Glanv. lib. 2. cap. 36. What is called a relief in the Conqueror's laws, preserved by Ingulf, seems to have been the heriot; since reliefs, as well as the other burdens of the feudal law, were unknown in the age of the Confessor, whose laws these originally were.

^U Lib. 7 cap 16. This practice was contrary the laws of king Edward, ratified by the Conqueror, as we learn from Ingulf, p. 91. But laws had at that time very little influence. Power and violence governed every thing.

time, where any man died intestate, an accident which must be very frequent, when the art of writing was so little known, the king, or the lord of the fief, pretended to seize all the moveables, and to exclude every heir, even the children of the deceased: A sure mark of a tyrannical and arbitrary government.

THE Normans indeed, settled in England, were, during this age, so violent and licentious a people, that they may be pronounced incapable of any true or regular liberty; which requires such a refinement of laws and institutions, such comprehensive views, such a sentiment of honour, such a spirit of obedience, and such a sacrifice of private interest and connexions to public order, as can only be the result of great reflection and experience; and must grow to perfection during several ages of settled and established government. A people, so insensible to the rights of their sovereign, as to disjoint, without necessity, the hereditary succession, and permit a younger brother to intrude himself into the place of the elder, whom they esteemed, and who was guilty of no crime but being absent, could not expect, that that prince would pay any greater regard to their privileges, or allow his engagements to fetter his power, and debar him from any considerable interest or convenience. They had indeed arms in their hands, which prevented the establishment of a total despotism, and left their posterity sufficient power, whenever they should attain a sufficient degree of reason, to acquire true liberty: But their turbulent disposition prompted them frequently to make such use of their arms, that they were more fitted to obstruct the execution of justice; than to stop the career of violence and oppression. The prince, finding, that greater opposition was often made to him when he enforced the laws, than when he violated them, was apt to render his own will and pleasure the sole rule of government, and on every emergence to consider more the power of the persons whom he might offend, than the rights of those whom he might injure. The very form of this charter of Henry proves, that the Norman barons (for they, rather than the people of England, are chiefly concerned in it) were totally ignorant of the nature of limited monarchy, and were ill qualified to conduct, in conjunction with their sovereign, the machine of government. It is an act of his sole power, is the result of his free grace, implies several ar-

ties which bind others as well as himself, and is therefore unfit to be the deed of any one who possesses not the whole legislative power, and who may not at pleasure revoke all his concessions.

KING Henry, farther to encrease his popularity, degraded and committed to prison Ralph Flambard, bishop of Durham, who had been the chief instrument of oppression under his brother^x: But this act was followed by another, which was a direct violation of his own charter, and was a bad prognostic of his sincere intentions to observe it: He kept the see of Durham vacant for five years, and during that time retained possession of all its revenues. Sensible of the great authority, which Anselm had acquired by his character of piety, and by the persecutions which he had undergone from William, he sent repeated messages to him at Lyons, where he resided, and invited him to return and take possession of his dignities^y. On the arrival of the prelate, he proposed to him the renewal of that homage which he had done his brother, and which had never been refused by any English bishop: But Anselm had acquired other sentiments by his journey to Rome, and gave the king an absolute refusal. He objected the decrees of the council of Bari, at which he himself had assisted; and he declared that so far from doing homage for his spiritual dignity, he would not so much as communicate with any ecclesiastic who paid that submission, or who accepted of investitures from laymen. Henry, who proposed, in his present delicate situation, to reap great advantages from the authority and popularity of Anselm, dared not to quarrel with him by insisting on his demand^z: He only desired that the controversy might be suspended; and that messengers might be sent to Rome, to accommodate matters with the pope, and to obtain his confirmation of the laws and customs of England.

Marriage
of the
king.

THERE immediately occurred an important affair, in which the king was obliged to have recourse to the authority of Anselm. Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, and niece to Edgar Atheling, had, on her father's death, and the subsequent revolutions of the Scottish

^x Chron. Sax. p. 208. W. Malm. p. 156. Matth. Paris, p. 39. Alur. Beverl. p. 144. ^y Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 783. Matth. Paris, p. 39. T. Rudborne, p. 273. ^z W. Malm. p. 225.

Scottish government, been brought to England, and educated under her aunt, Christina, in the nunnery of Rumsy. This princess Henry proposed to marry; but as she had worn the veil, though never taken the vows, doubts might arise concerning the lawfulness of the act; and it behoved him to be very careful not to shock, in any particular, the religious prejudices of his subjects. The affair was examined by Anselm in a council of the prelates and nobles, which was summoned at Lambeth; and Matilda there proved, that she had put on the veil, not with a view of entering into a religious life, but merely in imitation of a custom, familiar to the English ladies, who protected their chastity, from the brutal violence of the Normans, by taking shelter under that habit^A, which, amidst the horrible licentiousness of the times, was yet generally revered. The council, sensible that even a princess had otherwise no security for her honour, admitted this reason as valid: They pronounced, that Matilda was still free to marry^B; and her espousals with Henry were celebrated by Anselm with great pomp and solemnity^C. No act of the king's reign rendered him equally popular with his English subjects, and tended more to establish him on the throne. Tho' Matilda, during the life of her uncle and brothers, was not heir of the Saxon line, she was become very dear to the English on account of her connexions with it: And that people, who, before the conquest, had fallen into a kind of indifference towards their antient royal family, had felt so severely the tyranny of the Normans, that they reflected with infinite regret on their former liberty, and hoped for a more equable and mild administration, when the blood of their native princes should be united with that of their new sovereigns^D.

BUT the policy and prudence of Henry, which, if Invasion time had been allowed for these virtues to operate their by duke full effect, would have secured him possession of the Robert. crown, ran great hazard of being frustrated by the sudden appearance of Robert, who returned to Normandy about a month after the death of his brother William. He took the possession, without opposition, of that dutchy; and immediately made preparations for recovering

^A Eadmer, p. 57.
^D M. Paris, p. 40.

^B *Ibid.*

^C Hoveden, p. 468.

CHAP. ing England, of which, during his absence, he had, by
 VI. Henry's intrigues, been so unjustly defrauded. The great
 fame which he had acquired in the East forwarded his
 1101. pretensions; and the Norman barons, sensible of the consequences, expressed the same discontent at the separation of the duchy and kingdom, which had appeared on the accession of William. Robert de Belesm, earl of Shrewsbury and Arundel, William de la Warrenne, earl of Surrey, Arnulf de Montgomery, Walter Giffard, Robert de Pontefract, Robert de Mallet, Yvo de Gretnesnil, and many others of the principal nobility^E, invited Robert to make an attempt on England, and promised, on his landing, to join him with all their forces. Even the seamen were affected with the general popularity of his name, and they carried over to him the greatest part of a fleet, which had been equipped to oppose his passage^F. Henry, in this extremity, began to be apprehensive for his life, as well as for his crown; and had recourse to the superstition of the people, in order to oppose their sentiment of justice. He paid diligent court to Anselm, whose sanctity and wisdom he pretended to revere. He consulted him in all difficult emergencies; seemed to be governed by him in every measure; promised a strict regard to ecclesiastical privileges; professed a great attachment to Rome, and a resolution of persevering in an implicit obedience to the decrees of councils, and to the will of the sovereign pontiff. By these caresses and declarations, he gained entirely the confidence of the primate, whose influence over the people, and authority with the barons, was of the highest service to him, in his present situation. Anselm scrupled not to assure the nobles of the king's sincerity in those professions which he made, of avoiding the tyrannical and oppressive government of his father and brother^G: He even rode through the ranks of the army, recommended to the soldiers the defence of their prince, represented the duty of keeping their oaths of allegiance, and prognosticated to them all happiness from the government of so wise and just a sovereign^H. By this expedient, joined to the influence of the earls of Warwick and Melent,

^E Order. Vital. p. 785. ^F Chron. Sax. p. 209. Hoveden, p. 469. M. Paris, p. 40. Ann. Waverl. p. 142. Brompton, p. 998. Flor. Wigorn. p. 650. ^G W. Malm. p. 225. ^H Eadmer, p. 59. W. Malm. p. 156.

Mellent, of Roger Bigod, Richard de Redvers, and Robert Fitz-Hamon, powerful barons, who still adhered to the present governmentⁱ, the army were retained in the king's interests, and marched, with an appearance of union and firmness, to oppose Robert, who had landed with his forces at Portsmouth.

H A P. VI.

1101.

THE two armies lay in sight of each other for some days without coming to action; and both princes, being apprehensive of the event, which would probably be decisive, hearkened the more willingly to the mediation of Anselm and the other great men, who proposed an accommodation between them. After employing some negotiation, it was agreed, that Robert should resign his pretensions to England, and receive in lieu of them an annual pension of 3000 marks; that if either of the princes died without issue, the other should succeed to his dominions; that the adherents of each should be pardoned, and restored to all their possessions either in Normandy or England; and that neither Robert nor Henry should thenceforth encourage, receive, or protect the enemies of the other^k.

Accommodation with Robert.

THIS treaty, though calculated so much for Henry's advantage, he was the first who violated. He restored indeed the estates of all Robert's adherents; but was secretly determined, that noblemen so powerful and so ill affected, who had both inclination and ability to disturb his government, should not long remain unmolested in their present opulence and grandeur. He began with the earl of Shrewsbury, who was watched for some time by spies, and then indicted on a charge, consisting of forty-five articles. This turbulent nobleman, knowing his own guilt, as well as the prejudices of his judges, and the power of his prosecutor, had recourse to arms for defence; but being soon suppressed by the activity and address of Henry, he was banished the kingdom, and his great estate was confiscated^l. His ruin involved that of his two brothers, Arnulf de Montgomery, and Roger earl of Lancaster. Soon after followed the prosecution and

1102.

ⁱ Order. Vital. p. 783. ^k Chron. Sax. p. 209. W. Malmesb. p. 156. H. Hunt. p. 278. Hoveden, p. 469. Order. Vitals. p. 788. ^l Chron. Sax. p. 210. W. Malm. p. 156, 157. Hoveden, p. 469. Order. Vital. p. 806, 807, 808.

CHAP. and condemnation of Robert de Pontefract and Robert VI. de Mallet, who had distinguished themselves among Robert's adherents^x. William de Warenne was the next victim: Even William earl of Cornwall, son to the earl of Mortaigne, the king's uncle, having afforded matters of suspicion against him, lost all the vast acquisitions of his family in England^y. Though the usual violence and tyranny of the Norman barons afforded a plausible pretence for those prosecutions, and it is probable that none of the sentences, pronounced against these noblemen, was wholly iniquitous; men easily saw or conjectured, that the chief part of their guilt was not the injustice or illegality of their conduct. Robert, enraged at the fate of his friends, imprudently ventured to come into England, and he remonstrated with his brother, in severe terms, against the breach of treaty; But met with such bad reception, that he began to apprehend danger to his own liberty, and was glad to purchase an escape, by resigning his pension.

Attack of
Norman-
dy.

THE indiscretion of Robert soon exposed him to more fatal injuries. This prince, whose bravery and candor procured him respect, while at a distance, had no sooner attained the possession of power, and enjoyment of peace, than all the vigour of his mind relaxed, and he fell into contempt among those who approached his person, or were subjected to his authority. Abandoned alternately to dissolute pleasures and to womanish superstition, he was so remiss, both in the care of his treasure and the exercise of his government, that his servants pillaged his money with impunity, stole from him his very cloaths, and proceeded thence to practise every species of extortion on his defenceless subjects^a. The barons, whom a severe administration alone could have restrained, gave reins to their unbounded rapine upon their vassals, and inveterate animosities against each other; and all Normandy, during the reign of this benign prince, was become a scene of violence and depredation^b. The Normans at last, observing the regular government, which Henry, not-

^x Order. Vital. p. 805. ^y Chron. Sax. p. 212. W. Malmesb. p. 157. Hoveden, p. 470. ^z Chron. Sax. p. 211. W. Malmesb. p. 156. Gul. Gemet. p. 298. Order. Vital. p. 804. M. Paris, p. 40. ^a Order. Vital. p. 814. 815. W. Malmesb. p. 154, 157. Gul. Gemet. p. 298. Order. Vital. p. 814.

notwithstanding his usurped title, had been able to establish in England, applied to him, that he might use his authority for the suppression of these disorders; and they thereby afforded him a pretence for interposing in the affairs of Normandy^c. Instead of employing his mediation, to render his brother's government respectable, or redressing the grievances of the Normans; he was only attentive to support his own partizans, and to encrease their number by every art of bribery, intrigue, and insinuation. Having found, in a visit, which he made to that dutchy, that the nobility were more disposed to pay submission to him than to their legal sovereign; he collected, by very arbitrary extortions on England, a great army and treasure^d, and returned next year to Normandy, in a situation to obtain, either by violence or corruption, the dominion of that province. He took Bayeux by storm, after an obstinate siege: He made himself master of Caen by the voluntary submission of the inhabitants: But being repulsed at Falaise, and obliged, by the winter season, to raise the siege, he returned into England; after giving assurances to his adherents, that he would persevere in supporting and protecting them.

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NEXT year, he opened the campaign with the siege of Tenchebray; and it became evident from his preparations and progress, that he intended to usurp the entire possession of Normandy. Robert was at last roused from his lethargy; and, being supported by the earl of Mortaigne and Robert de Bellefme, the king's inveterate enemies, he raised a considerable army, and approached his brother's camp, with a view of finishing, in one decisive battle, the quarrel between them. He was now entered on that scene of action, in which alone he was qualified to excel; and he so animated his troops by his example, that they made a great impression on the English, and had nearly obtained the victory^e; when the flight of Bellefme threw the Normans into dismay, and occasioned their total defeat. Henry, besides doing great execution on the enemy, made near ten thousand prisoners; among whom was duke Robert himself, and all the most considerable

1106. Conquest of Normandy.

^c W. Malmesb. p. 154, 157. Gul. Neubr. lib. i. cap. 3. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 60 ^d Eadmer, p. 83. ^e H. Hunt. p. 379. M. Paris. p. 43. Brompton, p. 1002.

CHAP VI. ^{1106.} siderable barons, who adhered to his interests^F. This victory was followed by the final reduction of Normandy; Rouen immediately submitted to the conqueror: Falaise, after some negotiation, opened its gates; and by this acquisition, besides rendering himself master of an important fortress, he got into his hands prince William, the only son and heir of Robert: He assembled the states of Normandy; and having received the homage of all the vassals of the duchy, settled the government, revoked his brother's donations, and dismantled the castles, lately built, he returned into England, and carried along with him the duke as a prisoner. That unfortunate prince was detained in custody during the remainder of his life, which was no less than twenty-eight years, and he died in the castle of Cardiff in Glamorganshire; happy, if, without losing his liberty, he could have relinquished that power, which he was not qualified either to hold or exercise. Prince William was committed to the care of Helie de St. Saen, who had married Robert's natural daughter, and who, being a man of probity and honour, beyond what was usual in those ages, executed the trust with great affection and fidelity. Edgar Atheling, who had followed Robert in the expedition to Jerusalem, and who had lived with him ever since in Normandy, was another illustrious prisoner, taken in the battle of Tenchebray^G. Henry gave him his liberty, and settled a small pension on him, with which he retired; and he lived to a good old age in England, totally neglected and forgotten. This prince was distinguished by personal bravery; but nothing can be a stronger proof of his mean talents in every other respect, than that, notwithstanding he possessed the affections of the English, and enjoyed the only legal title to the throne, he was allowed, during the reigns of so many violent and jealous usurpers, to live unmolested, and go to his grave in peace.

^{1107.} A LITTLE after Henry had completed the conquest of Normandy, and settled the government of that province, he finished a controversy, which had been long depending between him and the pope, with regard to the investitures in ecclesiastical benefices; and though he was here obliged to relinquish some of the antient rights of the crown,
 Continuation of the quarrel with Anselm the primate.

^F Eadmer, p. 90. Chron. Sax. p. 214. Order. Vital. p. 321. ^G Chron. Sax. p. 214. Ann. Waverl. p. 144.

crown, he extricated himself from the difficulty on easier terms than most princes, who in that age were so unhappy as to be engaged in disputes with the apostolic see. The king's situation, in the beginning of his reign, obliged him to pay great court to Anselm; and the advantages which he had reaped from the zealous friendship of that prelate, had made him sensible how prone the minds of his people were to superstition, and what an ascendant the ecclesiastics had been able to assume over them. He had seen, on the accession of his brother Rufus, that though the rights of primogeniture were then violated, and the inclinations of almost all the barons opposed, yet the authority of Lanfranc, the primate, had prevailed over all other considerations; and his own case, which was still more unfavourable, afforded an instance, in which the clergy could shew more evidently their influence and authority. These recent examples, while they made him cautious not to offend that powerful body, convinced him, at the same time, that it was extremely his interest, to retain the former prerogative of the crown in filling offices of such vast importance, and to check the ecclesiastics in that independence, to which they visibly aspired. The choice, which his brother, in a fit of penitence, had made of Anselm, was so far unfortunate to the king's pretensions, that this prelate was celebrated for his piety and zeal and austerity of manners; and though his monkish devotion and narrow principles prognosticated no great knowledge of the world nor depth of policy, he was, on that very account, a more dangerous instrument in the hands of politicians, and retained a greater ascendant over the bigoted populace. The prudence and temper of the king appear in nothing more conspicuous than in the management of this delicate affair; where he was always sensible that it had become necessary for him to risque his whole crown, in order to preserve the most invaluable jewel of it^H.

ANSELM had no sooner returned from banishment, than his refusal to do homage to the king excited a dispute, which Henry evaded at that critical juncture, by promising to send a messenger, in order to compound the matter with Pascal the second, who then filled the papal chair. The messenger, as was probably foreseen, returned

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^H Eadmer, p. 56.

CHAP. turned with an absolute refusal of the king's demands¹;
 VI. and that fortified by many reasons, which were well qualified to operate on the understandings of men in those
 1107- ages. Pascal quoted the scriptures to prove that Christ

was the door; and thence he inferred, that all ecclesiastics must enter into the church through Christ alone, not through the civil magistrate, or any profane laymen^K.
 "It is monstrous," added the pontiff, "that a son should pretend to beget his father, or a man to create his God: Priests are called gods in scripture, as being the vicars of God: And will you, by your abominable pretensions to grant them their investiture, assume the right of creating them^L?"

BUT however convincing these arguments, they could not persuade Henry to resign so important a prerogative; and perhaps, as he was possessed of great reflection; and learning, he thought, that the absurdity of a man's creating his God, even allowing priests to be gods, was not urged with the best grace by the Roman pontiff. But as he desired still to avoid, at least to delay, the coming to any dangerous extremity with the church, he persuaded Anselm, that he should be able, by farther negotiation, to attain some composition with Pascal; and for that purpose, he dispatched three bishops to Rome, while Anselm sent two messengers of his own, to be more fully assured of the pope's intentions^E. Pascal wrote back letters equally positive and arrogant both to the king and primate; urging to the former, that by assuming the right of investitures, he committed a kind of spiritual adultery with the church, who was the spouse of Christ, and who must not admit of such a commerce with any other person^M; and insisting with the latter, that the pretensions of kings to confer benefices was the source of all simony;

¹ W. Malm. p. 225. ^K Eadmer, p. 60. This topic is farther enforced in p. 73, 74. See also W. Malm. p. 163.

^L Eadmer, p. 61. I much suspect, that this text of scripture is a forgery of his holiness: For I have not been able to find it. Yet it passed current in those ages, and was often quoted by the clergy as the foundation of their power. See Epist. St. Thom. p. 169.

^E Eadmer, p. 62. W. Malm. p. 235. ^M Eadmer, p. 63.

simony; a topic which had but too much foundation in those ages ^G. CHAP. VI.

HENRY had now no other expedient than to suppress the letter addressed to himself, and to persuade the three bishops to prevaricate, and assert, upon their episcopal faith, that Pascal had assured them of his private good intentions towards Henry, and of his resolution not to resent any future exertion of his prerogative in granting investitures; though he himself scrupled to give this assurance under his hand, lest other princes should copy the example and assume a like privilege ^H. Anselm's two messengers, who were monks, affirmed to him, that it was impossible this story could have any foundation; but their word was not deemed equivalent to that of three bishops; and the king, as if he had finally gained his cause, proceeded to fill the sees of Hereford and Salisbury, and to invest the new bishops in the usual manner ^I. But Anselm, who, as he had good reason, gave no credit to the asseveration of the king's messengers, refused not only to consecrate them, but even to communicate with them; and the bishops themselves, finding how odious they were become, returned to Henry the ensigns of their dignity ^K. The quarrel every day increased between the king and the primate: The former, notwithstanding the prudence and moderation of his temper, threw out menaces against all such as should pretend to oppose him in exerting the antient prerogatives of his crown: And Anselm, sensible of his disagreeable and dangerous situation, desired leave to make a journey to Rome, in order to lay the case before the sovereign pontiff ^L. Henry, well pleased to rid himself without violence of so inflexible an antagonist, readily granted him permission; and Anselm set out on his journey. He was attended to the sea-coast by infinite multitudes, not only monks and clergymen, but people of all ranks, who scrupled not in this manner to declare for their primate against their sovereign, and who regarded his departure as the final abolition of religion and true piety in the king-

^G Eadmer, p. 64, 66. ^H Eadmer, p. 65. W. Malm. p. 225. ^I Eadmer, p. 66. W. Malm. p. 225. Hoveden, p. 469. Sim. Dunelm. p. 228: ^K Hoveden, p. 470. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 59. Flor. Wigorn. p. 651. ^L Eadmer, p. 70. W. Malm. p. 226.

CHAP. kingdom^M. The king, however, confiscated all the revenues of his see; and sent William de Warelwast to negotiate with Pascal, and to find some means of accommodation in this delicate affair^N.

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THE English minister told Pascal, that his master would rather lose his crown than part with the right of granting investitures. "And I," replied Pascal, "would rather lose my head than allow him to retain it^O." Henry secretly prohibited Anselm to return, unless he resolved to conform himself to the laws and usages of the kingdom; and the primate took up his residence at Lyons^P, in expectation, that the king would at last be obliged to yield the point, which was the present object of controversy between them. Soon after, he was allowed to return to his monastery at Bec in Normandy; and Henry, besides restoring to him the revenues of his see, treated him with the greatest respect, and held several conferences with him, in order to soften his opposition, and bend him to submission^Q. The people of England, who thought all differences now accommodated, were inclined to blame their primate for absenting himself so long from his charge; and he daily received letters from his partizans, representing the necessity of his speedy return. The total extinction, they told him, of religion and christianity was likely to ensue from the want of his fatherly care: The most shocking customs prevail in England: And the dread of his severity being now removed, sodomy and the practice of wearing long hair gain ground, among all ranks of men, and these enormities openly appear every where, without sense of shame or fear of punishment^R.

THE policy of the court of Rome has been commonly much admired; and men, judging by success, have bestowed the highest eulogies on that prudence, by which a power, from such slender beginnings, could advance, without force of arms, to establish an universal and almost absolute monarchy in Europe. But the wisdom of such a long succession of men, who filled the papal throne, and who were of such different ages, tempers, and interests,

^M Eadmer, p. 71. ^N W. Malm. p. 226. ^O Eadmer, p. 73. ^P W. Malm. p. 226. ^Q M. Paris, p. 40. ^R Eadmer, p. 74. ^S M. Malm. p. 226. ^T M. Paris, p. 41. ^U Chron. Dunstable, p. 18. ^V Hoveden, p. 471. ^W Eadmer, p. 81.

terests, is not intelligible, and could never have place in nature. The instrument, indeed, with which they wrought, the ignorance and superstition of the people, is so gross an engine, of such universal prevalence, and so little liable to accident or disorder, that it may be successful even in the most unskilful hands; and scarce any indiscretion can frustrate its operations. While the court of Rome was openly abandoned to the most flagrant disorders, even while it was torn with schisms and factions, the power of the church made daily a sensible progress in Europe; and the temerity of Gregory and the caution of Pascal were equally fortunate in promoting it. The clergy, feeling the necessity, which they lay under, of being protected against the violence of princes, or vigour of the laws, were well pleased to adhere to a foreign head, who, being removed from the fear of the civil authority, could freely employ the whole power of the church in defending her antient or usurped properties and privileges, when invaded in any particular country: The monks, desirous of an independence on their diocesans, professed a still more devoted attachment to the triple crown; and the stupid people possessed no science nor reason, which they could oppose to the most exorbitant pretensions. Nonsense passed for demonstration: The most criminal means were sanctified by the piety of the end: Treaties were not supposed to be binding where the interests of God were concerned: The antient laws and customs of states had no authority against a divine right: Impudent forgeries were received as authentic monuments of antiquity: And the champions of holy church, if successful, were celebrated as heroes; if unfortunate, were worshipped as martyrs; and all events thus turned out equally to the advantage of clerical usurpations. Pascal himself, the present pope, was, in the course of this very controversy concerning investitures, involved in circumstances, and necessitated to follow a conduct, which would have drawn disgrace and ruin on any temporal prince, that had been so unfortunate as to fall into a like situation. His person was seized by the emperor Henry V. and he was obliged, by a formal treaty, to resign to that monarch the right of granting investitures, for which they had so long contended^s. In order to add greater solemnity to this agreement,

^s W. Malm. p. 167.

CHAP. VI. ment, the emperor and pope communicated together on the same hoste; one half of which was given to the prince, the other taken by the pontiff: The most tremendous imprecations were publicly denounced on either of them who should violate the treaty: Yet no sooner did Pascal recover his liberty, than he recalled all his concessions, and pronounced the sentence of excommunication against the emperor, who, in the end, was obliged to submit to the terms required of him, and to yield up all his pretensions, which he never could recal^T.

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THE king of England had very nearly fallen into the same dangerous situation: Pascal had already excommunicated the earl of Mellent, and the other ministers of Henry, who were instrumental in supporting his pretensions^U: He daily menaced the king himself with a like sentence; and he suspended the blow only to give him leisure to escape it by a timely submission. The malcontents waited impatiently for the opportunity of disturbing his government by conspiracies and insurrections^X: The king's greatest friends were anxious at the prospect of an incident, which would set their religious and civil duties at variance: And the countess of Blois, his sister, a princess of piety, who had great influence over him, was affrighted with the danger of her brother's eternal damnation^Y. Henry, on the other hand, seemed determined to run all hazards, rather than resign a prerogative of such importance, which had been enjoyed by all his predecessors; and it seemed probable, from his great prudence and ability, that he might be able to sustain his rights, and finally prevail in the contest. While Pascal and Henry thus stood mutually in awe of each other, it was the more easy to bring about an accommodation between them, and to find a medium, in which they might agree.

Compro-
mise with
Anselm.

BEFORE bishops took possession of their dignities, they had formerly been accustomed to pass through two ceremonials: They received from the hands of the sovereign a ring and crozier, as symbols of their office; and this was called their *investiture*: They also made those sub-

^T Padre Paolo sopra benef. eccles. p. 112. W. Malmesb. p. 170. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 63. Sim. Dunelm. p. 233.

^U Eadmer, p. 79.

^X Eadmer, p. 80.

^Y Eadmer, p. 79.

submissions to the prince, which were required of vassals by the rites of the feudal law, and which received the name of *homage*. And as the king might refuse both to grant the *investiture* and to receive the *homage*, tho' the chapter had, by some canons of the middle age, been endowed with the right of election; the sovereign had in reality the sole power of appointing prelates. Urban II. had equally deprived laymen of the rights of granting investiture and of receiving homage²: The emperors never were able, by all their wars and negotiations, to make any distinction be admitted between them: The interposition of profane laymen, in any particular, was still represented as impious and abominable: And the church openly aspired to a total independence on the state. But Henry had put England, as well as Normandy, in such a situation as gave greater weight to his negotiations; and Pascal was for the present contented with his resigning the right of granting investitures, by which the spiritual dignity was supposed to be conferred; and he allowed the bishops to do homage for their temporal properties and privileges^A. The pontiff was well pleased to have made this acquisition, which, he hoped, would in time involve the whole: And the king, anxious to procure an escape from a very dangerous situation, was contented to retain some, though a more precarious authority, in the election of prelates.

AFTER the principal controversy was accommodated, it was not difficult to adjust the other differences. The pope allowed Anselm to communicate with the prelates, who had already received investitures from the crown; and he only required of them some submissions for their past misconduct^B. He also granted Anselm a plenary power of remedying every other disorder, which, he said, might arise from the barbarousness of the country^C. Such was the idea which the popes then entertained of the English; and nothing can be a stronger proof of the miserable ignorance in which that people were then plunged,

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than

² Estimer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 163. Sira. Dunelm. p. 230.
^A Eadmer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 164. 227. Hoveden, p. 471. M. Paris, p. 43. T. Rudb. p. 274. Brompton, p. 1000. Wilkins, p. 303. Chron. Dunst. p. 21. ^B Estimer, p. 87. ^C Eadmer, p. 91.

CHAP. than that a man, who sat on the papal throne, and who
 VI. subsisted by absurdities and nonsense, should think himself
 intitled to treat them as barbarians.

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DURING the course of these controversies, a synod was held at Westminster, where the king, intent only on the main dispute, allowed some canons of less consequence to be enacted, which tended to promote the usurpations of the clergy. The marriage of priests was prohibited; a point which it was still found very difficult to carry into execution: And even laymen were not allowed to marry within the seventh degree of affinity^D. By this contrivance, the pope augmented the profits, which he reaped from granting dispensations; and likewise those from divorces. For as the art of writing was then rare, and parish registers were not regularly kept, it was not easy to ascertain the degrees of affinity even among people of rank; and any man, who had money sufficient to pay for it, might obtain a divorce, on pretence that his wife was more nearly related to him than was permitted by the canons. The synod also passed a vote, prohibiting the laity to wear long hair^E. The aversion of the clergy to this mode was not confined to England. When the king went over to Normandy, before he had conquered that province, the bishop of Seez, in a formal harangue, earnestly applied to him to redress the manifold disorders under which the government laboured, and to oblige the people to poll their hair in a decent form. Henry, though he would not resign his prerogatives to the church, was very willing to part with his hair: He cut it in the form which they required of him, and obliged all the courtiers to imitate his example^F.

THE acquisition of Normandy was a great point of Henry's ambition; being the antient patrimony of his family, and the only territory, which, while in his possession, gave him any weight or consideration on the continent: But the injustice of his usurpation was the source of great inquietude, involved him in frequent wars, and obliged him to impose on his English subjects those many heavy and arbitrary taxes, of which all the historians of that age

^D Eadmer, p. 67, 68 Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 22. ^E Eadmer, p. 68. ^F Order. Vital. p. 816.

unanimously complain^c. His nephew, William, was but six years of age, when he committed him to the care of Helie de St. Saen; and it is probable, that his reason for intrusting that important charge to a man of such an unblemished character, was to prevent all malignant suspicions, in case any accident should befall the life of the young prince. He soon repented him of his choice; but when he desired to recover possession of William's person, Helie withdrew his pupil, and carried him to the court of Fulk, count of Anjou, who gave him protection^h. In proportion as the young prince grew up to man's estate, he discovered virtues suitable to his birth; and wandering through different courts of Europe, excited the friendly compassion of many princes, and raised general indignation against his uncle, who had so unjustly bereaved him of his inheritance. Lewis the Gros, son of Philip, was at this time king of France, a brave and generous prince, who having been obliged, during the life-time of his father, to fly into England, in order to escape the persecutions of his stepmother Bertrude, had been protected by Henry, and had thence conceived a personal friendship for him. But these ties were soon dissolved after the accession of Lewis, who found his interest to be in so many particulars opposite to those of the English monarch, and who became sensible of the danger attending the annexation of Normandy to England. He joined, therefore, the counts of Anjou and Flanders in giving disquiet to Henry's government; and this monarch, in order to defend his foreign dominions, found himself obliged to go over to Normandy, where he resided two years. The war which ensued among these princes was attended with no memorable transaction; and produced only slight skirmishes on the frontiers, agreeably to the weak condition of the sovereigns in that age, whenever their subjects were not roused by some great and urgent occasion. Henry, by contracting his eldest son William, to the daughter of Fulkⁱ, detached that prince from the alliance, and ob-

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liged

^c Eadmer, p. 83. Chron. Sax. p. 211, 212, 213, 219, 220, 228. H. Hunt. p. 380. Hoveden, p. 470. Ann. Waverl. p. 143. ^h Order. Vital. p. 837. ⁱ Chron. Sax. p. 221. W. Malm. p. 160. Knyghton, p. 2380.

- CHAP. VI. liged the others to come to an accommodation with him, This peace was not of long duration. His nephew William, retired to the court of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, who espoused his cause; and the king of France, having soon after, for other reasons, joined the party, a new war was kindled in Normandy, which produced no event more memorable than had attended the former.
1110. At last the death of Baldwin, who was slain in an action near Eu, gave some respite to Henry, and enabled him to carry on war with more advantage against his enemies^k.

LEWIS, finding himself unable to wrest Normandy from the king by force of arms, had recourse to the dangerous expedient of applying to the spiritual power, and of affording the ecclesiastics a pretence to interpose in the temporal concerns of princes. He carried young William to a general council, which was assembled at Rheims by pope Calixtus II. presented the Norman prince to them, complained of the manifest usurpation and injustice of Henry, craved the assistance of the church for reinstating the true heir in his dominions, and represented the enormity of detaining in prison so brave a prince as Robert, one of the most eminent champions of the cross, and who by that very quality was placed under the immediate protection of the holy see^l. Henry knew how to defend the rights of his crown with vigour, and yet with dexterity. He had sent over the English bishops to this synod; but at the same time had warned them, that, if any farther claims were started by the pope or the ecclesiastics, he was determined to adhere to the laws and customs of England, and maintain the prerogatives transmitted to him by his ancestors. "Go," said he to them, "salute the pope in my name, hear his apostolical precepts; but take care to bring none of his new inventions into my kingdom." Finding, however, that it would be easier for him to elude than oppose the efforts of Calixtus, he gave his ambassadors orders to gain the pope and his favourites by liberal presents and promises. The complaints of the Norman prince were thenceforth heard with great coldness by the council; and Calixtus confessed, after a conference, which he had the same summer with

^k Chron. Sax. p. 222. H. Hunt. p. 380. Order. Vital. p. 843. M. Paris. p. 47.

^l Order. Vital. p. 858.

with Henry, that, of all men whom he had ever yet been acquainted with, he was beyond comparison the most eloquent and persuasive.

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THE warlike measures of Lewis proved as ineffectual as his intrigues. He had laid a scheme for surprising Noyon; but Henry having received intelligence of the design, marched to the relief of the place, and suddenly attacked the French at Andeley, as they were advancing to Noyon. A sharp action ensued; where Prince William behaved with great bravery, and the king himself was in the most imminent danger. He was wounded in the head by Crispin, a gallant Norman officer, who had followed the fortunes of William^M; but being rather animated than terrified by the blow, he immediately beat his antagonist to the ground, and so encouraged his troops by the example, that they put the French to total rout, and had very nearly taken their king prisoner. The dignity of the persons, engaged in this skirmish, rendered it the most memorable action of the war: For in other respects, it was not of great importance. There were nine hundred horsemen, who fought on both sides; yet were there only three persons slain. The rest were defended by that heavy armour, worn by the cavalry in those times^N. An accommodation soon after ensued between the kings of France and England; and the interests of young William were entirely neglected in it.

BUT this public prosperity of Henry was much over-^{1120.} balanced by a domestic calamity, which befel him. His Death of only son, William, had now reached his eighteenth year; prince and the king, from the facility, with which he himself William, had usurped the crown, dreading, that a like revolution might subvert his family, had taken care to have recognized successor by the states of the kingdom^O, and had carried him over to Normandy, in order to receive the homage of the barons of that dutchy. On his return, he set sail from Bartheur, and was soon carried by a fair wind out of sight of land. The prince was detained by some accident; and his sailors, as well as their captain, Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having spent the interval in drinking,
were

^M H. Hunt. p. 381. M. Paris, p. 47. Diceto, p. 593.
Brompton, p. 1007. M. West. p. 239. ^N Order. Vital.
p. 854. ^O W. Malm. p. 165.

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were so flustered, that, being in a hurry to follow the king, they heedlessly carried the ship on a rock, where she immediately foundered^P. The prince was put into the long boat, and had got clear of the ship; when hearing the cries of his natural sister, the countess of Perche, he ordered the sea-men to row back in hopes of saving her: But the numbers, who then crowded in, soon sunk the boat; and the prince with all his retinue perished^Q. Above an hundred and forty young noblemen, of the principal families of England and Normandy, were lost on this occasion. A butcher of Rouen was the only person on board who escaped^R: He clung to the mast, and was taken up next morning by fishermen. Fitz-Stephens, the captain, took hold also of the mast; but being informed by the butcher, that prince William had perished, he said, that he could not survive the disaster; and he threw himself headlong into the sea^S. Henry entertained hopes for three days, that his son had put into some distant port of England; But when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought him, he fainted away; and it was remarked, that he never after was seen to smile, nor ever recovered his wonted cheerfulness^T.

THE death of William may be regarded, in one respect, as a misfortune to the English; because it was the immediate source of those civil wars, which, after the demise of the king, caused such confusion in the nation; But it is remarkable, that the young prince had entertained a violent aversion to the natives; and had been heard to threaten, that when he should be king, he would make them draw the plough, and would turn them into beasts of burthen. These prepossessions he inherited from his father, who, though he was wont, when it might serve his purposes, to value himself on his birth, as a native of England^U, shewed in the course of his government, an extreme prejudice against that people. All hopes of preferment, to ecclesiastical as well as civil dignities, were denied them during this whole reign; and any

^P Order. Vital. p. 868. ^Q W. Malm. p. 165. H. Hunt. p. 381. Hoveden, p. 476. Brompton, p. 1012. ^R Sim. Dunelm. p. 242. Alured Beverl. p. 148. ^S Order. Vital. p. 868. ^T Hoveden, p. 476. Order. Vital. p. 869. Sim. Dunelm. p. 242. ^U Alur. Beverl. p. 148. Gul. Neub. lib. 1. cap. 3.

any foreigner, however ignorant or worthless, was sure to have the preference in every competition^x. As the English had given no disturbance to the government during the course of fifty years, this, inveterate antipathy, in a prince of so much temper as well as penetration, forms a presumption that the English of that age were still a rude and barbarous people even compared to the Normans, and impresses us with no very favourable idea of the Anglo-Saxon manners.

PRINCE William left no children; and the king had not now any legitimate issue; except one daughter, Matilda, whom, in 1110, he had betrothed, though only eight years of age^y, to the emperor Henry V. and whom he had then sent over to be educated in Germany^z. But as her absence from the kingdom, and her marriage into a foreign family, might endanger the succession, Henry, who was now a widower, was induced to marry in hopes of having sons; and he made his addresses to King's se-Adelas, daughter of Godfrey, duke of Lovaine, and cond marriage-niece of pope Calixtus, a young princess of an amiable person^a. But Adela brought him no children; and the prince, who was most likely to dispute the succession, and even the immediate possession of the crown, recovered hopes of subverting his rival, who had successively seized all his patrimonial dominions. William, the son of duke Robert, was still protected in the French court; and as Henry's connections with the count of Anjou were broke off, by the death of his son, Fulk joined the party of the unfortunate prince, gave him his daughter in marriage,

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^x Eadmer, p. 110. ^y Chron. Sax. p. 215. W. Malm. p. 166. Order. Vital p. 838. ^z Henry, by the feudal customs, was entitled to levy a tax for the marrying his eldest daughter, and he exacted three shillings a hyde on all England. H. Hunt p. 379 Some historians (as Brady, p. 270, and Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 182) heedlessly make this sum amount to above 800,000 pounds of our present money: But it could not exceed 135,000. Five hydes, sometimes less, made a knight's fee, of which there were about 60,000 in England, consequently near 300,000 hydes; and at the rate of three shillings a hyde, the sum would amount to 45,000 pounds, or 135,000 of our present money. See Rualborne, p. 257. In the Saxon times, there were only computed 243,600 hydes in England. ^a Chron. Sax. p. 223. W. Malm. p. 165.

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riage, and assisted him in raising disturbances in Normandy. But Henry found the means of drawing off the count of Anjou, by forming anew with him a nearer connexion than the former, and one more material to the interests of that count's family. The emperor, his son-in-law, dying without issue, he bestowed his daughter on Geoffrey, the eldest son of Fulk, and endeavoured to ensure her succession, by having her recognized heir of all his dominions, and obliging the barons both of Normandy and England to swear fealty to her^F. He hoped, that the choice of this husband would be more agreeable to all his subjects than that of the emperor; as securing them from the fears of falling under the dominion of a great and distant potentate, who might bring them into subjection, and reduce their country to the rank of a province: But the barons were displeased, that a step so material to national interests had been taken without consulting them^C; and Henry had experienced too sensibly the turbulency of their disposition, not to dread the effects of their resentment. It seemed probable, that his nephew's party might gain force from the increase of the malcontents; and an accession of power, which that prince inherited a little after, tended to render his pretensions still more dangerous. Charles earl of Flanders being assassinated during the celebration of divine service, king Lewis immediately put the young prince in possession of that country, to which he had pretensions, in the right of his grandmother Matilda, wife to the Conqueror^D. But William survived a very little time this piece of good fortune, which seemed to open the door to still farther prosperity. He was killed in a skirmish with the landgrave of Alsace, his competitor for Flanders; and his death put an end, for the present, to the jealousy and inquietude of Henry^E.

THE chief merit of this prince's government consists in the profound tranquillity which he established and maintained throughout all his dominions during the greatest part of his reign^F. The mutinous barons were retained

^F Chron. Sax. p. 230. W. Malm. p. 175. Gul. Gemet. p. 304. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 68. ^C W. Malm. p. 175. The annals of Waverly, p. 150. say, that the king asked and obtained the assent of all the barons. ^D Chron. Sax. p. 231. Gul. Gemet. p. 299. Alur. Beverl. p. 151. ^E Chron. Sax. p. 232. ^F Gul. Gemet. p. 302.

In subjection; and his neighbours, in every attempt which they made upon him, found him so well prepared, that they were discouraged from continuing or renewing their enterprizes. In order to repress the incursions of the Welsh, he brought over some Flemings in the year 1111, and settled them in Pembrokeshire, where they long maintained a different language, and customs and manners, from their neighbours^G. Though his government seems to have been arbitrary in England, it was judicious and prudent; and was as little oppressive as the necessity of his affairs would permit. He wanted not attention to the redress of grievances; and historians mention in particular the levying purveyance, which he endeavoured to moderate and restrain. The tenants in the king's demesne lands were at that time obliged to supply *gratis* the court with provisions, and to furnish carriages on the same hard terms, when the king made a progress into any of the counties. These exactions were so grievous, and levied in so licentious a manner, that the farmers, when they heard of the court's approach, often deserted their houses, as if an enemy had invaded them^H; and sheltered their persons and families in the woods, from the insults of the king's retinue. Henry prohibited these enormities, and punished the persons guilty of them by cutting off their hands, legs, or other members^I. But the prerogative was perpetual; the remedy applied by Henry was temporary; and the violence of this remedy, so far from giving security to the people, was only a proof of the ferocity of the government in that age, and threatened a quick return of like abuses.

ONE great and difficult object of the king's prudence was the guarding against the encroachments of the court of Rome, and protecting the liberties of the church of England. The pope, in the year 1101, had sent Guy, archbishop of Vienne, as legate into Britain; and though he was the first that for many years had appeared there in that character, and his commission gave general surprise^K, the king, who was then in the commencement of his reign, and was attended with many difficulties, was obliged to submit to this encroachment on his authority.

^G W. Malm. p. 158. Brompton, p. 1003. ^H Eadmer, p. 94. Chron. Sax. p. 212. ^I Eadmer, p. 94. ^K Ibid. p. 58.

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But in the year 1116, Anselm, abbot of St. Sabas, who was coming over with a like legatine commission, was prohibited to enter the kingdom^F; and pope Calixtus, who in his turn was then labouring under many difficulties, by reason of the pretensions of Gregory, and antipope, was obliged to promise, that he never would for the future, except when solicited by the king himself, send any legate into England^G. Notwithstanding this engagement, the pope, so soon as he had suppressed his antagonist, granted the Cardinal de Crema a legatine commission for that kingdom; and the king, who, by reason of his nephew's intrigues and invasions, found himself at that time in a dangerous situation, was obliged to submit to the exercise of this commission^H. A synod was called by the legate at London; where, among other canons, a vote passed, enacting severe penalties on the marriage of the clergy^I; and the Cardinal, in a public harangue, declared it to be an unpardonable enormity, that a priest should dare to consecrate and touch the body of Christ immediately after he had risen from the side of a strumpet: For that was the decent appellation which he gave to the wives of the clergy. But it happened, that, the very next night, the officers of justice, breaking into a disorderly house, found the cardinal in bed with a courtesan^K; an incident which threw such a ridicule upon him, that he immediately stole out of the kingdom: The synod broke up; and the canons against the marriage of clergymen were worse executed than ever^L.

HENRY, in order to prevent this alternate revolution of concessions and encroachments, sent William, then archbishop of Canterbury, to remonstrate with the court of Rome against these abuses, and to assert the liberties of the English churches. It was an usual maxim with every

^F Hoveden, p. 474.^G Eadmer, p. 125, 137, 138.^H Chron. Sax. p. 229.^I Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 34.^K Hoveden, p. 478. M. Paris, p. 48. Matth. West. ad ann. 1125. H. Huntingdon, p. 382. It is remarkable, that this last writer, who was a clergyman as well as the others, makes an apology for using such freedom with the fathers of the church; but says, that the fact was notorious, and ought not to be concealed.^L Chron. Sax. p. 234.

every pope, when he found that he could not prevail in any pretension, to grant princes or states a power which they had always exercised, to resume at a proper season the claim which seemed to be resigned, and to pretend, that the civil magistrate had possessed the authority only from a special indulgence of the Roman pontiff. After this manner, the pope, finding that the French nation would not admit his claim of granting investitures, had passed a bull, giving the king that authority; and he now practised a like invention to elude the complaints of the king of England. He made the archbishop of Canterbury his legate, renewed his commission from time to time, and still pretended, that the rights, which that prelate had ever exercised as metropolitan, were entirely derived from the indulgence of the apostolic see. The English princes, and Henry in particular, who were glad to avoid any present contest of so dangerous a nature, commonly acquiesced by their silence in these pretensions of the court of Rome^M.

As every thing in England remained in tranquillity, Henry took the opportunity of paying a visit to Normandy, to which he was invited, as well by his affection for that country, as by his tenderness for his daughter, the empress Matilda, who was always his favourite. Some time after, that princess was delivered of a son, who

^M The legates *a latere*, as they were called, were a kind of delegates, who possessed the full power of the pope in all the provinces committed to their charge, and were very busy in extending, as well as exercising it. They nominated to all vacant benefices, assembled synods, and were anxious to maintain ecclesiastical privileges, which never could be fully protected without incroachments on the civil power. If there was the least concurrence or opposition, it was always supposed that the civil power was to give way: Every deed, which had the least pretence of holding of any thing spiritual, as marriages, testaments, promissory oaths, were brought into the spiritual court, and could not be canvassed before a civil magistrate. These were the established laws of the church; and where a legate was sent immediately from Rome, he was sure to maintain the papal claims with the utmost rigour: But it was an advantage to the king to have the archbishop of Canterbury appointed legate, because the connexions of that prelate with the kingdom tended to moderate his measures.

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VI. to ensure her succession, made all the nobility of Eng-
 land and Normandy renew the oath of fealty, which
 1133. they had already sworn to her^N. The joy of this event,

and the satisfaction which he reaped from his daughter's
 company, who bore successively two other sons, made his
 residence in Normandy very agreeable to him^O; and he
 seemed determined to pass the rest of his days in that
 1135. country; when an incursion of the Welsh obliged him to
 1st of Dec. think of returning into England. He was preparing for
 the journey, when he was seized with a sudden illness at
 St. Denis le Forment, from eating too plentifully of lam-
 preys, a food which always agreed better with his palate
 than his constitution^P. He died in the sixty-seventh year
 of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign; leaving by
 will his daughter, Matilda, heiress of all his dominions,
 without making any mention of her husband Geoffrey,
 who had given him several causes of displeasure^Q.

Death,
 and char-
 acter of
 Henry.

THIS prince was one of the most accomplished that
 has filled the English throne, and possessed all the quali-
 ties both of body and mind, natural and acquired, which
 could fit him for the high station, to which he attained.
 His person was manly, his countenance engaging, his
 eyes clear, serene, and penetrating. The affability of
 his address encouraged those who might be overawed by
 the sense of his dignity or of his wisdom; and though he
 often indulged his facetious humour, he knew how to
 temper it with discretion, and ever kept at a distance
 from all indecent familiarities with his courtiers. His
 superior eloquence and judgment would have given him
 an ascendant even had he been born in a private station;
 and his personal bravery would have procured him re-
 spect, though it had been less supported by art and
 policy. By his great progress in literature, he acquired
 the name of *Beau-clerc* or the scholar; but his application
 to those sedentary pursuits abated nothing of the activity
 and vigilance of his government; and tho' the learning of
 that age was better fitted to corrupt than improve the un-
 derstanding, his natural good sense preserved itself un-
 tainted both from the pedantry and superstition, which
 were then so prevalent among men of letters. His tem-

per

^N W. Malm. p. 177. ^O H. Hunt. p. 315. ^P H. Hunt.
 p. 385. M. Paris, p. 50. ^Q W. Malm. p. 178.

per was very susceptible of the sentiments as well of friendship as of resentment^R; and his ambition, though high, might be deemed moderate and reasonable; had not his conduct towards his brother and nephew shewed that he was too much disposed to sacrifice to it all the maxims of justice and equity. But the total incapacity of Robert for government afforded his younger brother a reason or pretence for seizing the scepter both of Normandy and England; and when violence and usurpation are once begun, necessity obliges a prince to continue in the same criminal course, and engages him in measures, which his better judgment and sounder principles would have induced him to reject with warmth and indignation.

KING Henry was much addicted to women; and historians mention no less than seven illegitimate sons and six daughters, who were born to him^S. Hunting was also one of his favourite amusements; and he exercised great rigour against those who encroached on the royal forests, which were augmented during this reign^T, though their number and extent were already enormous. To kill a stag was as criminal as to murder a man: He made all the dogs be mutilated, which were kept on the borders of his forests: And he sometimes deprived his subjects of the liberty of hunting on their own lands, or even cutting their own woods. In other respects, he executed justice, and that with rigour; the best maxim which a prince in that age could follow. Stealing, was first made capital in this reign^U: False coining, which was then a very common crime, and which had extremely debased the money, was punished severely by Henry^X. Near fifty criminals of this kind were at one time hanged or mutilated; and though these punishments seem to have been exercised in a manner somewhat arbitrary, they were grateful to the people, more attentive to present advantages, than jealous of general laws. There is a code, which passes under the name of Henry I. but the best antiquarians have agreed not to think it genuine. It

is

^R Order. Vital. p. 805. ^S Gul. Gemet. lib. 8. cap. 29.

^T W. Malm. p. 179. ^U Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Flor. Wigorn. p. 653. Hoveden, p. 471. ^X Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Hoveden, p. 471. Annal. Waverl. p. 149.

CHAP. is however a very antient compilation, and may be useful to instruct us in the manners and customs of the times. **VI.** It appears from it, that a great distinction was then made between the English and Normans, much to the advantage of the latter^y. The deadly feuds and the liberty of private revenge, which had been avowed by the Saxon laws, were still continued, and were not yet wholly illegal^z.

1135. **HENRY**, on his accession, granted a charter to London, which seems to have been the first step towards rendering that city a corporation. By this charter, they were empowered to hold the farm of Middlesex at three hundred pounds a year, to elect their own sheriff and justiciary, and to hold pleas of the crown; and they were exempted from Scot, Danegelt, trials by combat, and lodging the king's retinue. These, with a confirmation of the privileges of their court of Hustings, wardmotes, and common halls and their liberty of hunting in Middlesex and Surry, are the chief articles of this charter^a.

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^y LL. Hen. 1. § 18. 75. ^z LL. Hen. § 82. ^a Lambardi *Archæologia* ex edit. Twissden Wilkins, p. 235.

C H A P. VII.

S T E P H E N.

Accession of Stephen—War with Scotland—Insurrection in favour of Matilda—Stephen taken prisoner—Matilda crowned—Stephen released—Restored to the crown—Continuation of the civil wars—Compromise between the king and prince Henry—Death of the king.

IN the progress and settlement of the feudal law, the male succession to fiefs had taken place some time before the female was admitted; and estates, being considered as military benefices, not as property; were transmitted to such only as could serve in the armies, and perform in person the conditions upon which they were originally granted. But after that the continuance of rights, during some generations, in the same family, had, in a great measure, obliterated the primitive idea, the females were gradually admitted to the possession of feudal property; and the same revolution of principles, which procured them the inheritance of private estates, naturally introduced their succession to government and authority. The failure, therefore, of male-heirs to the kingdom of England and duchy of Normandy, seemed to leave the succession open, without a rival, to the empress, Matilda; and as Henry had made all his vassals in both states swear fealty to her, he presumed, that they would not easily be induced to depart at once from her hereditary right, and from their own reiterated oaths and engagements. But the irregular manner, in which he himself had acquired the crown, might instruct him, that neither his Norman nor English subjects were as yet capable of adhering to a strict rule of government; and as every precedent of this kind seems to give authority to new usurpations, he had reason to dread, even from his own family, some invasion of his daughter's title, which he had taken such pains to establish.

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ADELA, daughter of William the Conqueror, had been married to Stephen, count of Blois, and had brought him several sons; among whom, Stephen, and Henry, the two youngest, had been invited over to England by the

CHAP. the late king, and had received great honours, riches, and preferment from the zealous friendship, which that prince bore to every one, that had been so fortunate as to acquire his favour and good opinion. Henry, who had betaken himself to the ecclesiastical profession, was created abbot of Glasterbury and bishop of Winchester; and though these dignities were considerable, Stephen had, from his uncle's liberality, attained establishments still more solid and durable ^B. The king had married him to Matilda, who was daughter and heir of Eustace count of Boulogne, and who brought him, besides that feudal sovereignty in France, an immense property in England, which, in the distribution of lands, had been conferred by the Conqueror on the family of Boulogne. Stephen also by this marriage acquired a new connexion with the royal family of England; as Mary, his wife's mother, was sister to David, the present king of Scotland, and to Matilda, the first wife of Henry, and mother of the empress. The king, still imagining, that he strengthened the interest of his family by the aggrandizement of Stephen, took pleasure in enriching him by the grant of new possessions; and he conferred on him the great estate forfeited by Robert Malet in England, and that forfeited by the earl of Mortaigne in Normandy. Stephen, in return, professed a great attachment to his uncle; and appeared so zealous for the succession of Matilda, that when the barons swore fealty to that princess, he contended with Robert, earl of Gloucester, the king's natural son, who should first be admitted to give her this testimony of devoted zeal and fidelity ^C. Meanwhile, he continued to cultivate, by every art of popularity, the friendship and affection of the English nation; and many virtues, with which he seemed to be endowed, favoured the success of his intentions. By his bravery, activity and vigour, he acquired the esteem of the barons: By his generosity, and by an affable and familiar address, unusual in that age among men of his high quality, he obtained the affections of the people, particularly of the Londoners ^D. And though he dared not to take any steps towards his farther grandeur, lest he might expose himself to the jealousy of so penetrating a prince as Henry; he still hoped, that, by

accu-

^B Gul. Neubr. p. 360. Brompton, p. 1023.
Malm. p. 192.

^C W.
^D Ibid. p. 179. Gest. Steph. p. 928.

accumulating riches and power, and by acquiring popularity, he might some time be able to open his way to the throne.

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No sooner had Henry expired, than Stephen, insensible to all the ties of gratitude and fidelity, and blind to danger, gave full reins to his criminal ambition, and trusted, that, even without any previous intrigue, the celerity of his enterprize and the boldness of his attempt might overcome the weak attachment, which the English and Normans in that age bore to the laws, and to the rights of their sovereign. He hastened over to England; and though the citizens of Dover, and those of Canterbury, apprized of his purpose, shut their gates against him, he stopped not till he arrived at London, where some of the lower rank, instigated by his emissaries, as well as moved by his general popularity, immediately saluted him king. His next point was to acquire the good will of the clergy; and by performing the ceremony of his coronation, put himself in possession of the throne, from which, he was confident, it would not be easy afterwards to expel him. His brother, the bishop of Winchester, was useful to him in these capital articles; and having gained Roger, bishop of Salisbury^E, who, though he owed a great fortune and advancement to the favour of the late king, preserved no sense of gratitude to that prince's family, he applied, in conjunction with that prelate, to William, archbishop of Canterbury, and required him, in virtue of his office, to give the royal unction to Stephen. The primate, who, as all the others, had sworn fealty to Matilda, refused to perform this ceremony^F; but his opposition was overcome by an expedient equally dishonourable with the other steps, by which this revolution was effected. Hugh Bigod, steward of the household, made oath before the primate, that the late king, on his death-bed, had discovered a dissatisfaction with his daughter Matilda, and had expressed his intention of leaving the count of Boulogne heir to all his dominions^G. William, either believing or feigning to believe Bigod's testimony, anointed Stephen, and put the crown upon his head; and by this religious ceremony, that prince, with-

22d Dec.

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^E H. Hunt. p. 386. Gul. Neubr. p. 360, 362. Ann. Waverl. p. 152. ^F Gest. Steph. p. 929. ^G Matth. Paris, p. 51. Diceto, p. 505. Chron. Dunst. p. 23.

out any shadow either of hereditary title or consent of the nobility or people, was allowed to proceed to the exercise of sovereign authority. Very few barons attended his coronation^H; but none opposed his usurpation, however unjust or flagrant. The sentiment of religion, which, if corrupted into superstition, has often little efficacy in fortifying the duties of civil society, overlooked the multiplied oaths, taken in favour of Matilda, and only rendered the people obedient to a prince, who was countenanced by the clergy, and who had received from the primate the rite of royal union and consecration^I.

STEPHEN, that he might farther secure his tottering throne, passed a charter, in which he made liberal promises to all orders of men; to the clergy, that he would speedily fill all vacant benefices, and would never levy the rents of any of them during the vacancy; to the nobility, that they should not be prosecuted for hunting in their own forests; and to the people, that he would remit the tax of Danegelt and restore the laws of king Edward^K. The late king had a great treasure at Winchester, amounting to an hundred thousand pounds^L: And Stephen, by seizing this money, immediately turned against Henry's family, the precaution which that prince had employed for their grandeur and security: An event, which naturally attends the policy of amassing treasures. By means of this money, the usurper insured the compliance, though not the attachment, of the principal clergy and nobility; and not trusting to this frail security, he invited over from the continent, particularly from Britanny and Flanders, great numbers of those bravos or disorderly soldiers, with whom every country in Europe, by reason of the general ill police and turbulent government, extremely abounded^M. These mercenary troops guarded his throne, by the terrors of the sword; and Stephen, that

^H Brompton, p. 1023. ^I Such stress was formerly laid on the rite of coronation, that the monkish writers never give any prince the title of king, till he is crowned; though he had for some time been in possession of the crown, and exercised all the powers of sovereignty.

^K W. Malmesbury, p. 179. Hoveden, p. 482. M. Paris, p. 51. Hagul. p. 314. Brompton, p. 1024.

^L W. Malmesbury, p. 179. Chron. Sax. p. 238. Gest. Stephen. p. 929. M. Paris, p. 51. ^M W. Malmesbury, p. 179.

that he might also overawe all malcontents by new and additional terrors of religion, procured a bull from Rome, which ratified his title, and which the pope, seeing this prince in actual possession of the throne, and pleased with an appeal to his authority in secular controversies, very readily granted him ^N.

1135.

MATILDA and her husband, Geoffrey, were as unfortunate in Normandy as they had been in England. The Norman nobility, moved by an hereditary animosity against the Angevins, first applied to Theobald, count of Blois, Stephen's elder brother, for protection and assistance ^O; but hearing afterwards, that Stephen had got possession of the English crown, and having many of them the same reasons as formerly for desiring a continuance of their union with that kingdom, they transferred their allegiance to Stephen, and put him in possession of their government ^P. Lewis the younger, the present king of France, accepted the homage of Eustace, Stephen's eldest son, for the dutchy; and the farther to corroborate his connexions with that family, he betrothed his sister, Constantia, to the young prince ^Q. The count of Blois resigned all his pretensions, and received in lieu of them a pension of two thousand marks; and Geoffrey himself was obliged to conclude a truce for two years with Stephen, on condition of the king's paying him, during that time, an annual pension of five thousand ^R. Stephen, who had taken a journey to Normandy, finished all these transactions in person, and soon after returned to England.

1136.

ROBERT, earl of Gloucester, natural son of the late king, was a man of honour and ability; and as he was much attached to the interests of his sister, Matilda, and zealous for the lineal succession to the crown, it was chiefly from his intrigues and resistance, that the king had reason to dread a new revolution of government. This nobleman, when he received intelligence of Stephen's accession, found himself much embarrassed concerning the measures, which he should pursue in that difficult emergency. To swear allegiance to the usurper appeared to him very dishonourable, and a breach of his oath to

X 2

Matilda :

^N Haglstadt, p. 259, 313. ^O Order. Vital. p. 902.
M. Paris, p. 51. ^P Order. Vital. p. 903. ^Q Hoveden,
p. 482. Gervase, p. 1350. ^R M. Paris, p. 52.

CHAP. VII. Matilda: To refuse giving this pledge of his fidelity was to banish himself from England, and to be totally incapacitated from serving the royal family, or contributing to their restoration^s. He offered Stephen to do him homage and to take the oath of fealty; but with an express condition, that the king should maintain all his stipulations, and should never invade any of Robert's rights or dignities: And Stephen, though sensible, that this reserve, so unusual in itself, and so unbecoming the duty of a subject, was meant only to afford Robert a pretence for a revolt on the first favourable opportunity, was obliged, by the numerous friends and retainers of that nobleman, to receive him on these terms^t. The clergy, who could scarce, at this time, be deemed subjects to the crown, imitated that dangerous example; and annexed to their oath of allegiance this condition, that they were only bound so long as the king defended the ecclesiastical liberties, and supported the discipline of the church^u. The barons, in return for their submission, exacted terms still more destructive of public peace, as well as of royal authority: Many of them required the right of fortifying their castles, and of putting themselves in a posture of defence; and the king found himself totally unable to refuse his consent to this exorbitant demand^x. All England was immediately filled with those fortresses, which the noblemen garrisoned, either with their vassals, or with licentious soldiers, who flocked to them from all quarters. Unbounded rapine was exercised upon the people for the maintenance of these troops; and private animosities, which had with difficulty been restrained by law, now breaking out without controul, rendered England a scene of uninterrupted violence and devastation. Wars between the nobles were carried on with the utmost fury in every quarter; the barons even assumed the right of coining money, and of exercising, without appeal, every act of jurisdiction^y, and the inferior gentry, as well as the people, finding no defence from the laws, during this total dissolution of sovereign authority, were obliged, for their immediate safety, to pay court to some neighbouring chieftain, and to purchase his protection; both

^s Malmesb. p. 179. ^t Ibid. M. Paris, p. 51. ^u W. Malm. p. 179. ^x Ibid. p. 180. ^y Trivet, p. 19. Gul. Neubr. p. 372. Chron. Heming. p. 487. Brompton, p. 1035.

both by submitting to his exactions, and by assisting him in his rapine upon others. The erection of one castle proved the immediate cause of building many more; and even those, who obtained not the king's permission, thought that they were entitled, by the great principle of self-preservation, to put themselves on an equal footing with their neighbours, who commonly were also their enemies and rivals. The aristocratical power, which is so tyrannical and oppressive in the feudal governments, had now risen to its utmost height, during the reign of a prince, who, tho' endowed with vigour and ability, had usurped the throne without the pretence of a title, and who was necessitated to tolerate in others the same violence, to which he himself had been beholden for his sovereignty.

BUT Stephen was not of a disposition to submit long to these usurpations, without making some efforts for the recovery of royal authority. Finding that the legal prerogatives of the crown were resisted and abridged, he was also tempted to make his power the sole measure of his conduct; and to violate all those concessions, which he himself had made on his accession², as well as the antient and established privileges of his subjects. The mercenary soldiers, who chiefly supported his authority, having exhausted the royal treasure, subsisted by depredations; and every place was filled with the best grounded complaints against the government. The earl of Gloucester, having now settled with his friends the project of an insurrection, retired beyond sea, sent the king a defiance, solemnly renounced his allegiance, and upbraided him with the breach of those conditions, which had been annexed to the oath of fealty, sworn by that nobleman^A.

1137.

1138.

David, king of Scotland, appeared at the head of an army in defence of his niece's title, and penetrating into Yorkshire, committed the most barbarous devastations on that country^B. The fury of his massacres and ravages enraged the northern nobility, who might otherwise have been inclined to join him; and William earl of Albemarle, William Piercy, Robert de Brus, Roger Moubray,

War with Scotland.

² W. Malm. p. 180. M. Paris, p. 51. ^A W. Malm. p. 180. ^B H. Hunt. p. 388. Hoveden, p. 482. M. Paris, p. 52. Gul. Neubr. p. 361. Chron. de Mailr. p. 166. Hagulfstad, p. 260, 316. Brompton, p. 1025.

CHAP. VII. { 1138. 22d August. bray, Ilbert Lacy, Walter d'Espee, powerful barons in those parts, assembled an army, with which they encamped at North-Allerton, and awaited the arrival of the enemy. A great battle was here fought, called the battle of the *Standard*, from a high crucifix, erected by the English on a waggon, and carried along with the army as a military ensign^z. The king of Scots was routed with great slaughter, and he himself, as well as his son, Henry, very narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the English. This success overawed the malcontents in England, and might have given some stability to Stephen's throne, had he not been so elated with prosperity as to engage in a controversy with the clergy, who were at that time an overmatch for any monarch.

THOUGH the exorbitant power of the church, in ancient times, weakened the authority of the crown, and interrupted the course of the laws, it may be doubted, whether, in ages of such violence and outrage, it was not rather advantageous that some limits were set to the power of the sword, both in the hands of the prince and nobles, and that men were taught to pay regard to some principles and privileges. The chief misfortune was, that the prelates on some occasions, acted entirely as barons, employed military power against their sovereign or their neighbours, and thereby often increased those disorders, which it was their duty to repress. The bishop of Salisbury, in imitation of the nobility, had built two strong castles, one at Sherborne, another at the Devizes, and had laid the foundations of a third at Malmesbury: His nephew, Alexander bishop of Lincoln, had erected a fortress at Newark: And Stephen, who was now sensible from experience of the mischiefs attending these multiplied citadels, resolved to begin with destroying those of the clergy, who by their function seemed less intitled than the barons to such military securities^A. Taking pretence of a fray, which had arisen in court between the retinue of the bishop of Salisbury and that of the earl of Brittany, he seized both that prelate and the bishop of Lincoln, threw them into prison, and obliged them

1139.

^z Chron. Sax. p. 241. H. Hunt. p. 388. Hoveden, p. 483. Order. Vital. p. 918. Chron. Norman. p. 977. Trivet, p. 7. ^A Gul. Neubr. p. 362.

them by menaces to deliver up those places of strength which they had lately erected ^B. C H A P. VII.

HENRY, bishop of Winchester, the king's brother, being armed with a legatine commission, now conceived himself to be an ecclesiastical sovereign no less powerful than the civil; and forgetting the ties of blood which connected him with the king, he resolved to vindicate the clerical privileges, which, he pretended, were here openly violated. He assembled a synod at Westminster, 30th Aug. and there complained of the impiety of Stephen's measures, who had employed violence against the dignitaries of the church, and had not awaited the sentence of a spiritual court, by which alone, he affirmed, they could lawfully be tried and condemned, if their conduct had any wise merited censure or punishment ^C. The synod ventured to send a summons to the king, charging him to appear before them, and to justify his measures ^D; and Stephen, instead of resenting this indignity, sent Aubrey de Vere to plead his cause before that assembly. De Vere accused the two prelates of treason and sedition; but the synod refused to try the cause, or examine their conduct, till those castles, of which they had been dispossessed, were previously restored to them ^E. The bishop of Salisbury declared, that he would appeal to the pope; and had not Stephen and his partizans employed menaces, and even shewn a disposition of executing violence by the hands of the soldiery, affairs had instantly come to extremity between the crown and the mitre ^F.

WHILE this quarrel, joined to so many other grievances, encreased the discontents among the people, the empress, invited by the opportunity, and secretly encouraged by the legate himself, landed in England, with Robert earl of Gloucester, and a retinue of an hundred and forty knights ^G. She fixed her residence at Arundel castle, whose gates were opened to her by Adelais, the Queen-dowager, now married to William de Albini, earl of Suffex; and she excited by messengers her partizans to take arms in every county of England. Adelais, who had 22d Sept. Insurrection in favour of Matilda.

^B Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmesb. p. 181. Order. Vital. p. 919, 920. Gest. Steph. p. 944. Chron. Norm. p. 978. Trivet, p. 7. Gervase, p. 1345. ^C W. Malm. p. 182.

^D W. Malm. p. 182. M. Paris, p. 53. ^E W. Malm. p. 183. ^F Ibid. ^G W. Malm. p. 183.

CHAP. VII. had expected that her daughter-in-law, would have invaded the kingdom with a much greater force, became apprehensive of danger^H; and Matilda, to ease her of her fears, removed first to Bristol, which belonged to her brother Robert^I, thence to Gloucester, where she remained under the protection of Miles, a gallant nobleman in those parts, who had embraced her cause. Soon after, Geoffrey Talbot, William Mohun, Ralph Lovel, William Fitz-John, William Fitz-Alan, Paganell, and many other barons, declared for her^K; and her party, which was generally favoured in the kingdom, seemed every day to gain ground upon that of her antagonist.

WERE we to relate all the military events transmitted to us by contemporary and authentic historians, it would be easy to swell our accounts of this reign into a large volume; but those incidents, so little memorable in themselves, and so confused both in time and place, could afford neither instruction nor entertainment to the reader. It suffices to say, that the war was spread into every quarter; and that those turbulent barons, who had already shaken off, in a great measure, the restraint of government, having now obtained the pretence of a public cause, carried on their devastations with redoubled fury, exercised implacable vengeance on each other, and set no bounds to their oppressions over the people. The castles of the nobility were become receptacles of licensed robbers, who, sallying forth day and night, committed spoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities; put the captives to torture, in order to make them reveal their treasures; sold their persons to slavery; and set fire to the houses, after they had pillaged them of every thing valuable. The fierceness of their disposition, leading them to commit wanton destruction, frustrated their rapacity of its purpose; and the property and persons even of the ecclesiastics, generally so much revered, were at last, from necessity, exposed to the same outrage, which had laid waste the rest of the kingdom. The land was left untilled; the instruments of husbandry were destroyed or abandoned; and a grievous famine, the natural result of these disorders, affected equally both parties, and

^H W. Malmesb. p. 184. Gervase, p. 1346. ^I Gest. Steph. p. 947. Gervase, p. 1346. ^K Order. Vitalis, p. 517. M. Paris, p. 52.

and reduced the spoilers, as well as the defenceless people, to the most extreme want and indigence ^L. CHAP. VII.

AFTER several fruitless negotiations and treaties of peace, which never interrupted those destructive hostilities, there happened at last an event, which seemed to promise some end of the public calamities. Ralph, earl of Chester, and his half brother, William de Roumara, partizans of Matilda, had surprized the castle of Lincoln ^M; but the citizens, who were better affected to Stephen, having invited him to their aid, that prince laid close siege to the castle, in hopes of rendering himself soon master of the place, either by assault or famine. The earl of Gloucester hastened with an army to the relief of his friends; and Stephen, informed of his approach, marched into the field with an intention of giving him battle. After a violent shock, the two wings of the royalists were put to flight; and Stephen himself, surrounded by the enemy, was at last, after exerting great efforts of valour, borne down by numbers, and taken prisoner ^N. He was conducted to Gloucester; and though at first treated with humanity, was soon after, on some suspicions, thrown into prison, and loaded with irons ^O. 1140.

STEPHEN's party were entirely broke by the captivity of their leader, and the barons came in daily from all quarters, and did homage to Matilda. That princess, however, amidst all her prosperity, knew, that she was not secure of success, unless she could gain the confidence of the clergy; and as the conduct of the legate had been of late very ambiguous, and shewed his intentions to have rather aimed at humbling his brother, than totally ruining him, she employed every endeavour to fix him in her interests. She held a conference with him in an open plain near Winchester; where she promised upon oath, that if he would acknowledge her for sovereign, would recognize her title as the sole descendant of the late 1141.

^L Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmesb. p. 185. Gest. Steph. p. 961. M. Paris, p. 53. Gul. Neubr. p. 372. Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 665. Gervase, p. 1346. ^M Order. Vital. p. 921. ^N Gul. Neubr. p. 363. Ann. Waverl. p. 154. Chron. Heming p. 482. Hagul p. 269. Gervase, p. 1352, 1354. Chron. Sax. p. 241. W. Malm. p. 187. H. Hunt. p. 392. Hoveden, p. 487. Chron. Norm. p. 979. M. Paris, p. 53, 54. Brompton, p. 1031.

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VII.

1141.

late king, and would return to the allegiance, which he, as well as the rest of the kingdom, had sworn to her, he should in return be entire master of the administration, and in particular should, at his pleasure, dispose of all vacant bishoprics and abbeys. Earl Robert, her brother, Brian Fitz-Count, Miles of Gloucester, and other great men, became guarantees for her observing these engagements^P; and the prelate was at last induced to promise her his allegiance, but that still burdened with the express condition, that she should on her part fulfil her promises. He then conducted her into Winchester, led her in procession to the cathedral, and with great solemnity, in the presence of many bishops and abbots, denounced curses against all those who cursed her, pouring out blessings on those who blessed her, granted absolution to such as were obedient to her, and excommunicated such as were rebellious^Q. Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, soon after came also to court, and swore allegiance to the empress^R.

Matilda
crowned.

MATILDA, that she might farther ensure the attachment of the clergy, was willing to receive the crown from their hands; and instead of assembling the states of the kingdom, the measure which the constitution, had it been either fixed or regarded, seemed necessarily to require, she was contented, that the legate should summon an ecclesiastical council, and that her title to the throne should there be recognized and acknowledged. The legate, addressing himself to the assembly, told them, that in the absence of the empress, Stephen his brother, had been permitted to reign, and, previously to his ascending the throne, had seduced them by many fair promises, of honouring and exalting the church, of maintaining the laws, and of reforming all abuses: That it grieved him to observe how much that prince had been in every particular wanting to his engagements; public peace was interrupted, crimes were daily committed with impunity, bishops were thrown into prison and forced to surrender their possessions, abbeys were put to sale, churches were pillaged, and the most enormous disorders prevailed in the administration: That he himself, in order to procure a redress of these grievances, had formerly summoned the

^P W. Malm. p. 187. ^Q Chron. Sax. [p. 242. Contin.
Flor. Wig. p. 676. ^R W. Malmes. p. 187.

the king before a council of bishops; but instead of inducing him to amend his conduct, had rather offended him by that expedient: That that prince, however misguided, was still his brother, and the object of his affections; but he must however regard his interests as much subordinate to those of his heavenly father, who had now rejected him, and thrown him into the hands of his enemies: That it principally belonged to the clergy to elect and ordain kings; he had summoned them together for that purpose; and having invoked the divine assistance, he now pronounced Matilda, the only descendant of Henry, their late sovereign, queen of England. The whole assembly, by their acclamations or silence, gave, or seemed to give, their assent to this declaration^s.

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THE only laymen summoned to this council, which decided the fate of the crown, were the Londoners, and even these were required, not to give their opinion, but submit to the decrees of the synod. The deputies of London, however, were not so passive: They insisted, that their king should be delivered from prison; but were told by the legate, that it became not the Londoners, who were regarded as noblemen in England, to take part with those barons, who had basely forsaken their lord in battle, and who had treated holy church with contumely^t. It is with reason that the citizens of London assumed so much authority, if it be true, what is related by Fitz-Stephen a contemporary author, that that city could at this time bring into the field no less than 80,000 combatants^u.

LONDON, notwithstanding its great power, and its attachment to Stephen, was at last obliged to submit to Matilda;

^s W. Malmesb. p. 188. This author, a judicious man, was present, and says, that he was very attentive to what passed. This speech, therefore, may be regarded as entirely authentic.

^t W. Malmesb. p. 188. ^u P. 4. Were this account to be depended on, London must at that time have contained near 400,000 inhabitants, which is above double the number it contained at the death of queen Elizabeth. But these loose calculations or rather guesses, deserve very little credit. Peter of Blois, a contemporary writer and a man of sense, says there were only forty thousand inhabitants in London, which is much more likely.

CHAP. VII. Matilda; and her authority, by the prudent conduct of earl Robert, seemed to be established over the whole kingdom: But affairs remained not long in this situation. 1141. That princess, besides the disadvantages of her sex, which weakened her influence over a turbulent and martial people, was of a passionate, imperious spirit^x, and knew not how to temper with affability the harshness of a refusal. Stephen's queen, seconded by many of the nobility, petitioned for the liberty of her husband; and offered, that, on this condition, he should renounce the crown, and retire into a convent^y. The legate desired, that prince Eustace, his nephew, might inherit Boulogne and the other patrimonial estates of his father^z: The Londoners applied for the establishment of king Edward's laws, instead of those of king Henry, which, they said, were grievous and oppressive^a. All these petitions were denied in the most haughty and peremptory manner.

THE legate, who had probably never been sincere in his compliance with Matilda's government, availed himself of the ill humour excited by this imperious conduct, and secretly instigated the Londoners to a revolt. A conspiracy was entered into to seize the empress's person; and she saved herself from the danger by a precipitate retreat^b. She fled to Oxford: Soon after she went to Winchester, whither the legate, desirous to save appearances, and watching the proper opportunity to ruin her cause, had retired. But having assembled all his retainers, he openly joined his force to that of the Londoners, and to Stephen's mercenary troops, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom; and he besieged Matilda in Winchester^c. That princess, being hard pressed by famine, made her escape; but in the flight, earl Robert, her brother, fell into the hands of the enemy^d. This nobleman, though a subject, was as much the life and soul of his own party, as Stephen was of the other; and the

^x Gul. Neubr. p. 363. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 74. Hagul. p. 270. ^y Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 677.

Brompton, p. 1031. ^z Brompton, p. 1031. ^a Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 677. Gervase, p. 1355. ^b Chron. Sax.

p. 242. W. Malm. p. 189. ^c Trivet, p. 10. Gul. Neubr. p. 363. ^d Chron. Sax. p. 242. Hovedan, p.

488. Gest. Steph. p. 957. Chron. Norm. p. 979

the empress, sensible of his merit, consented to exchange the prisoners on equal terms^E. The civil war was again kindled with greater fury than ever. CHAP. VII.

EARL Robert, finding the successes on both sides nearly balanced, went over to Normandy, which, during Stephen's captivity, had submitted to the earl of Anjou; and he persuaded Geoffrey to allow his eldest son, Henry, a young prince of great hopes, to take a journey into England, and appear at the head of his partizans^F. This expedient, however, produced nothing decisive. Stephen took Oxford after a long siege: He was routed by earl Robert at Wilton^G: And the empress, though of a masculine spirit, yet being harassed with a variety of good and bad fortune, and alarmed with continual dangers to her person and family, at last retired into Normandy, whither she had sent her son some time before. The death of her brother, which happened nearly about the same time, would have proved fatal to her interests, had not some incidents occurred, which checked the course of Stephen's prosperity. This prince, finding, that the castles built by the noblemen of his own party encouraged the spirit of independence, and were little less dangerous than those which remained in the hands of the enemy, endeavoured to extort from them a surrender of those fortresses; and he alienated the affections of many of them by this equitable demand^H. The artillery also of the church, which his brother had brought over to his side, after some interval, joined the other party. Eugenius III. had mounted the papal throne; the bishop of Winchester was bereaved of the legatine commission, which was conferred on Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, the enemy and rival of the former legate. That pontiff also, having summoned a general council at Rheims in Champagne, instead of allowing the church of England, as had been usual, to elect its own deputies, nominated five English bishops to represent that church, and required their presence in the council. Stephen, who notwithstanding his present difficulties, was jealous of

1141.

Stephen released.

1142.

1143.

1146.

Continuation of the civil wars.

^E Chron. Sax. p. 242. M. Paris, p. 53. ^F Chron. Norm. p. 979. M. Paris, p. 54. ^G Gest. Steph. p. 960. Trivet, p. 11. M. Paris, p. 54. ^H Chron. Sax. p. 242. W. Malm. p. 181. Trivet, p. 16. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 75. Hagulf. p. 278.

CHAP. of the rights of his crown, refused them permission to attend¹; and the pope, sensible of his advantage in con-

VII.

1146.

tending with a prince who reigned by a disputed title, took revenge by laying all Stephen's party under an interdiction^k. By this sentence, which was now first known in England, divine service was prohibited, and all the functions of religion ceased, except the baptism of infants and the absolution of dying persons. The discontents of the royalists at this situation were augmented by a comparison with Matilda's party, who enjoyed all the benefits of the sacred ordinances; and Stephen was at last obliged, by making proper submissions to the see of Rome, to remove the reproach from his party^l.

1148.

THE weakness of both sides, rather than any decrease of mutual animosity, having produced a tacit cessation of arms in England, many of the nobility, Roger de Mowbray, William de Warenne, and others, finding no opportunity to exert their military ardor at home, insisted themselves in a new crusade, which, with surprising success, after all former disappointments and misfortunes, was now preached by St. Barnard^m. But an event soon after happened, which threatened a revival of hostilities in England. Prince Henry, who had reached his sixteenth year, was desirous of receiving the honour of knighthood; a ceremony which every gentleman in that age passed through before he was admitted to the use of arms, and which was even deemed requisite for the greatest princes. He proposed to receive his admission from his great-uncle, David king of Scotland; and for that purpose, he passed through England with a great retinue, and was attended by the most considerable of his partizansⁿ. He staid some time with the king of Scotland, made incursions into England; and by his dexterity and vigour in all manly exercises, by his valour in war, and his prudent conduct in every occurrence, he roused the hopes of his party, and gave symptoms of those great qualities, which he afterwards displayed when he mounted the throne

¹ Epist. St. Thom. p. 225.
1807.

^k Chron. W. Thom. p. 226.

^m Hagulst. p. 275, 276.

ⁿ Hoveden, p. 490. Gul. Neubr. p. 378. Gervase, p. 1366.

throne of England. Soon after his return to Normandy, he was, by Matilda's consent, invested in that dutchy^o; and upon the death of his father, Geoffrey, which happened in the subsequent year, he took possession both of Anjou and Maine, and concluded a marriage, which brought him a great accession of power, and rendered him extremely formidable to his rival. Eleanor, the daughter and heir of William, duke of Guienne, and earl of Poitou, had been married sixteen years to Lewis VII. king of France, and had attended him in a crusade, which that monarch commanded against the infidels: But having there lost the affections of her husband, and even fallen under some suspicions of gallantry with a handsome Saracen, Lewis, more delicate than politic, procured a divorce from her, and restored her those rich provinces, which by her marriage she had annexed to the crown of France^p. Young Henry, neither discouraged by the inequality of years, nor by the reports of Eleanor's gallantry, made successful courtship to that princess, and espousing her six weeks after her divorce, got possession of all her dominions as her dowry^q. The lustre which he received from this acquisition, and the prospect of his rising fortune, had such an effect in England, that when Stephen, desirous to ensure the crown to his son Eustace, required the archbishop of Canterbury to anoint that prince as his successor, the primate refused compliance, and made his escape beyond sea, to avoid the violence and revenge of Stephen^r.

1150.

1152.

1153.

HENRY, informed of these dispositions in the people, made an invasion on England; and having gained some advantage over Stephen at Malmesbury, and having taken that place, he proceeded thence to throw succours into Wallingford, which the king had advanced with a superior army to besiege^s. A decisive action was every day expected; when the great men on both sides, terrified with the prospect of farther bloodshed and confusion, interposed with their good offices, and set on foot a negotiation between these rival princes. The death of Eustace, during the course of the treaty, facilitated its con-

^o M. Weft. p. 245. ^p Trivet, p. 21. ^q M. Paris, p. 59. Chron. Heming. p. 489. Brompton, p. 1040. ^r H. Hunt. p. 395. Epist. St. Thom. p. 225. ^s Gervase, p. 1367.

C.H.A.P. conclusion ^T; and an accommodation was at last concluded, by which it was agreed, that Stephen should possess the crown during his life-time, that justice should be administered in his name, even in the provinces which had submitted to Henry, and that this latter prince should, on Stephen's death, succeed to the kingdom, and William, Stephen's son, to Boulogne, and his patrimonial estate ^U. After all the barons had sworn to the observance of this treaty, and done homage to Henry, as to the heir of the crown, that prince evacuated the kingdom; and the death of Stephen, which happened next year, after a short illness, prevented all those quarrels and jealousies, which were likely to have ensued in so delicate a situation.

1153. Compro-
mise be-
tween the
king and
prince
Henry.

Death of
the king.

1154.
Oct. 25th.

ENGLAND suffered great miseries during the reign of this prince; but his personal character, allowing for the temerity and injustice of his usurpation, appears not liable to any great exception; and he seems to have been well qualified, had he succeeded by a just title, to have promoted the happiness and prosperity of his subjects ^X. He was possessed of industry, activity, and courage, to a great degree; was not deficient in ability; had the talent of gaining men's affections; and notwithstanding his precarious situation, never indulged himself in the exercise of any cruelty or revenge ^Y. His advancement to the throne procured him neither tranquillity nor happiness: and though the situation of England prevented the neighbouring states from taking any durable advantage of her confusions, her intestine wars and disorders were to the last degree ruinous and destructive. The court of Rome also was permitted, during these disorders, to make farther advances in her usurpations; and appeals to the pope, which had been always strictly prohibited by the English laws, became now common in every ecclesiastical controversy ^Z.

C H A P.

^T Trivet, p. 22. Gul. Neubr. p. 379. Chron. Heming. p. 488. Brompton, p. 1037. ^U Chron. Sax p. 243. Chron. Norm p. 089. M. Paris, p. 61. Brompton, p. 1037. 1038. Rymer, vol. i. p. 13. ^X W. Malmesb. p. 180. ^Y M. Paris, p. 51. Hagul, p. 312. ^Z H. Hunt. p. 395.

C H A P. VIII.

H E N R Y II.

State of Europe—of France—First acts of Henry's government—Disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical powers—Thomas a Becket, archbishop of Canterbury—Quarrel between the king and Becket—Constitutions of Clarendon—Banishment of Becket—Compromise with him—His return from banishment—His murder—Grief—and submission of the king.

THE extensive confederacies, by which the European potentates are now at once united and set in opposition to each other, and which, though they diffuse the least spark of dissention through the whole, are at least attended with this advantage, that they prevent any violent revolutions or conquests in particular states, were totally unknown in antient ages; and the theory of foreign politics, in each kingdom, formed a speculation much less complicate and involved than at present. Commerce had not yet bound the most distant nations together in so close a chain: Wars, finished in one campaign and often in one battle, were little affected by the movements of remote states: The imperfect communication among the kingdoms, and their ignorance of each other's situation, made it practicable for a great number of them to combine in one project or effort: And above all, the turbulent spirit and independent situation of the barons or great vassals in each state gave so much occupation to the sovereign, that he was obliged to confine his attention chiefly to his own system of government, and was more indifferent about what passed among his neighbours. Religion alone, not politics, carried abroad the views of princes; and either fixed their thoughts on the Holy Land, whose conquest and defence was deemed a point of common honour and interest, or engaged them in intrigues with the court of Rome, to whom they had yielded the direction of ecclesiastical affairs, and who was every day assuming more authority than they were willing to allow her.

C H A P. VIII.

1154.
State of Europe.

VOL. I.

Y.

BEFORE

CHAP.
VIII.

1154.

BEFORE the conquest of England by the duke of Normandy, this island was as much separated from the rest of the world in politics as in situation; and except from the inroads of the Danish pirates, the English, happily confined at home, had neither enemies nor allies on the continent. The foreign dominions of William connected them with the kings and great vassals of France; and while the opposite pretensions of the pope and emperor in Italy produced a continual intercourse between Germany and that country, the two great monarchs of France, and England formed, in another part of Europe, a separate system, and carried on their wars and negotiations, without meeting either with opposition or support from the others.

State of
France.

ON the decline of the Carlovingian race, the nobles, in every province of France, taking advantage of the sovereign's weakness, and obliged to provide, each for his own defence, against the ravages of the Norman free-booters, had assumed, both in civil and military affairs, an authority almost independent, and had reduced, within very narrow limits, the prerogative of their princes. The accession of Hugh Capet, by annexing a great fief to the crown, had brought some addition of power to the royal dignity; but this fief, though considerable for a subject, appeared a narrow basis of force in a prince who was placed at the head of so great a community. The royal demesnes consisted only of Paris, Orleans, Estampes, Compiègne, and a few places, scattered over the northern provinces: In all the rest of the kingdom, the prince's authority was more nominal than real: The vassals were accustomed, nay intitled to make war, without his permission, on each other: They were even entitled, if they conceived themselves injured, to turn their arms against their sovereign: They exercised all civil jurisdiction, without appeal, over their tenants and inferior vassals: Their common jealousy of the crown easily united them against any attempt on their exorbitant privileges; and as some of them had attained the power and authority of great princes, even the smallest baron was sure of immediate and effectual protection. Besides six ecclesiastical peerages, which, with the other immunities of the church, cramped extremely the general execution of justice; there were six lay-peerages, Burgundy, Normandy, Guienne, Flanders, Thoulouse, and Champagne, which

which formed very extensive and puissant sovereignties. And though the combination of all these princes and barons could, on occasion, muster a mighty power: Yet was it very difficult to set that great machine in movement; it was almost impossible to preserve harmony in its parts; a sense of common interest alone could, for a time, unite them under their sovereign against a common enemy; but if the king attempted to turn the force of the community against any mutinous vassal, the same sense of common interest made the others oppose themselves to the success of his pretensions. Lewis the Great, the last sovereign, marched, at one time, to his frontiers against the Germans at the head of an army of two hundred thousand men; but a petty lord of Corbeil, of Puiset, of Couci, was able, at another time, to set that prince at defiance, and to maintain open war against him.

THE authority of the English monarch was much more extensive within his kingdom, and the disproportion much greater between him and the most powerful of his vassals. His demesnes and revenue were very large, compared to the greatness of his state: He was accustomed to levy arbitrary exactions from his subjects: His courts of judicature exercised jurisdiction in every part of the kingdom: He could crush by his power, or by a judicial sentence, well or ill founded, any obnoxious baron: And though the feudal institutions, which prevailed in his kingdom, had the same tendency, as in other states, to exalt the aristocracy, and depress the monarchy, it required, in England, according to its present constitution, a great combination of the vassals to oppose their sovereign lord, and there had not hitherto arisen any baron so powerful, as of himself to make war against the prince, and afford protection to the inferior barons.

WHILE such were the different situations of France and England, and the latter enjoyed so great advantages over the former; the accession of Henry II. a prince of great abilities, possessed of so many rich provinces on the continent, might appear an event dangerous, if not fatal to the French monarchy, and sufficient to break entirely the balance between the states. He was master, in the right of his father, of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine; in that of his mother, of Normandy; in that of his

CHAP. wife, of Guienne, Poitou, Xaintogne, Auvergne,
 VIII. Perigord, Angoumois, the Limousin. He soon after an-
 nexed Brittany to his other states, and was already pos-
 1154- sessed of the superiority over that province, which, on
 the first cession of Normandy to Rollo the Dane, had,
 by Charles the Simple, been granted in vassalage to
 that formidable ravager. These provinces composed
 above a third of the whole French monarchy, and were
 much superior, in extent and opulence, to those territories,
 which were subjected to the immediate jurisdiction and
 government of the king. The vassal was here more
 powerful than his liege lord : The situation, which had
 enabled Hugh Capet to depose the Carlovingian princes,
 seemed here to be renewed, and that with much greater
 advantages on the side of the vassal : And when England
 was added to so many provinces, the French king had
 reason to apprehend, from this conjuncture, some greater
 disaster to himself and to his family. But in reality, it
 was this circumstance, which appeared so formidable, that
 saved the Capetian race, and, by its consequences, exalted
 them to that pitch of grandeur, which they at present
 enjoy.

THE limited authority of the prince in the feudal con-
 stitutions prevented the king of England from employ-
 ing with advantage the force of so many states, which
 were subjected to his government; and these different
 members, disjointed in situation, and disagreeing in
 laws, language and manners, were never thoroughly ce-
 mented into one monarchy. He soon became, both from
 his distant place of residence and from the incompatibi-
 lity of interests, a kind of foreigner to his French domi-
 nions; and his subjects on the continent considered their
 allegiance as more naturally due to their superior lord,
 who lived in their neighbourhood, and who was acknow-
 ledged to be the supreme head of their nation. He was
 always at hand to invade them; their immediate lord
 was often at too great a distance to protect them; and
 any disorder in any part of his dispersed dominions gave
 advantages against him. The other powerful vassals of
 the French crown were rather pleased to see the expulsion
 of the English, and were not affected with that jealousy,
 which would have arisen from the oppression of a co-
 vassal, who was of the same rank with themselves. By
 this

this means, the king of France found it more easy to conquer these numerous provinces from England, than to subdue a duke of Normandy or Guienne, a count of Anjou, Maine or Poictou. And after reducing such extensive territories, which immediately incorporated with the body of the monarchy, he found greater facility of uniting to the crown the other great fiefs, which still remained separate and independent.

BUT as these important consequences could not be foreseen by human wisdom, the French king remarked with terror the rising grandeur of the house of Anjou or Plantagenet; and in order to retard its progress, he had ever maintained a strict union with Stephen, and had endeavoured to support the tottering fortunes of that bold usurper. But after this prince's death, it was too late to think of opposing the succession of Henry, or preventing the performance of those stipulations, which, with the unanimous consent of the nation, he had made with his predecessor. The English, tired with civil wars, and disgusted with the bloodshed and depredations, which, during the course of so many years, had attended them, were little disposed to violate their oaths, by excluding the lawful heir from the succession of their monarch^A. Many of the most considerable fortresses were in the hands of his partizans; the whole nation had had occasion to see the noble qualities with which he was endowed^B, and to compare them with the mean talents of William, the son of Stephen; and as they were acquainted with his great power, and were rather pleased to see the accession of so many foreign dominions to the crown of England, they never entertained the least thoughts of resisting him. Henry himself, sensible of the advantages attending his present situation, was in no hurry to arrive in England; and being engaged in the siege of a castle on the frontiers of Normandy, when he received intelligence of Stephen's death, he made it a point of honour not to depart from his enterprize, till he had brought it to an issue. He then set out on his journey, and was received in England with the acclamations of all orders of men, who swore with pleasure the oath of fealty and allegiance to him.

THE

^A Math. Paris, p. 65.^B Gul. Neubr. p. 381.

CHAP. VIII.

1155.
First acts
of Hen-
ry's go-
vernment.

THE first act of Henry's government corresponded to the high idea entertained of his vigour and abilities, and prognosticated the re-establishment of justice and tranquillity, of which the kingdom had been so long bereaved. He immediately dismissed all those mercenary soldiers, who had committed infinite disorders in the nation; and he sent them abroad, together with William d'Ypres, their leader, the great friend and confidant of Stephen^C. He revoked all the grants made by his predecessor^D, and even those which necessity had extorted from the empress, Matilda; and that princess, who had resigned her rights in favour of Henry, made no opposition to a measure so necessary for supporting the dignity of the crown. He repaired the coin, which had been extremely debased during his predecessor's reign; and he took proper measures against the return of like abuses^E. He was rigorous in the execution of justice, and in the suppression of robbery and violence; and that he might restore authority to the laws, he caused all the new erected castles to be demolished, which had proved so many sanctuaries to freebooters and rebels^F. The earl of Albemarle, Hugh Mortimer, and Roger, the son of Miles of Gloucester, were inclined to make some resistance to this salutary measure; but the approach of the king with his forces, soon obliged them to submit^G.

1156.

EVERY thing being restored to full tranquillity in England, Henry went abroad in order to oppose the attempts of his brother, Geoffrey, who, during his absence, had made an incursion into Anjou and Maine, had advanced some pretensions to these provinces, and had got possession of a considerable part of them^H. On the king's appearance,

^C Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 30. ^D Neubr. p. 382. ^E Hoveden, p. 491. ^F Hoveden, p. 491. Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Brompton, p. 1043. ^G Neubr. p. 382. Chron. W. Heming, p. 491. Gervase, p. 1377.

^H William of Newbridge, p. 383. (who is copied by latter historians) asserts, that Geoffrey had some title to the counties of Maine and Anjou. He pretends, that count Geoffrey, his father, had left these dominions by a secret will, and had ordered that his body should not be buried, till Henry should swear to the observance of it, which he ignorantly of the contents,

ance, the people returned to their allegiance; and Geoffrey, resigning his claim, for an annual pension of a thousand pounds, departed and took possession of the county of Nantz, which the inhabitants, who had expelled count Hoel, their prince, had put into his hands¹. Henry returned to England the following year; and the incursions of the Welsh then provoked him to make an invasion upon them; where the natural fastnesses of the country bred him great difficulties, and even brought him into danger. His vanguard, being engaged in a narrow pass, was put to rout; and Henry de Essex, the hereditary standard-bearer, seized with a panic, threw down the standard, took to flight, and exclaimed that the king was slain: And had not that prince immediately appeared in person, and led on his troops with great bravery, the consequences might have proved fatal to the whole army^K. For this misbehaviour, Essex was afterwards accused of felony by Robert de Montfort; was vanquished in single combat; his estate was confiscated; and he himself was thrust into a convent^L. The submissions of the Welsh procured them an accommodation with England.

THE martial disposition of the princes in that age engaged them to head their own armies in every enterprise, even the most frivolous; and their feeble authority made it commonly impracticable for them to delegate, on occasion, the command to their generals. Geoffrey, the king's brother, died soon after he had acquired possession of Nantz; and though he had no other title to that county, than the voluntary submission or election of the inhabitants two years before, Henry laid claim to the territory as devolved to him by hereditary right, and he went over to support his pretensions by force of arms. Conan, duke or earl of Brittany (for these titles are given indifferently by historians to these princes) pretended

tents, was induced to do. But besides, that this story is not very likely of itself, and savours of monkish fiction, it is found in no other antient writer, and is contradicted by some of them, particularly the monk of Marmoutier, who had better opportunities than Newbridge of knowing the truth. See Vita Gaufr. Duc. Norman. p. 103.

¹ Brompton, p. 1049.

^K Newbr. p. 383. Chron. W. Heming. p. 492.

^L M. Paris, p. 70. Newbr. p. 383.

CHAP.
VIII.

1158.

tended that Nantz had been lately separated by rebellion from his principality, to which of right it belonged; and immediately on Geoffrey's death, he took possession of the disputed territory. Left Lewis, the French king, should interpose in the controversy, Henry paid him a visit; and so allured him by caresses and civilities, that an alliance was contracted between them, and they agreed, that young Henry, heir of the English monarchy, should be affianced to Margaret of France^M, though the former was only five years of age, and the latter was still in her cradle. Henry, now secure of meeting with no interruption on this side, advanced with his army into Brittany; and Conan, in despair of being able to make resistance, delivered up the county of Nantz to the king. The ability of that monarch procured him farther and more important advantages from this incident. Conan, harassed with the turbulent disposition of his subjects, was desirous of procuring to himself the support of so great a monarch; and he betrothed his daughter and only child, yet an infant, to Geoffrey, the king's third son, who was of the same tender years. The duke of Brittany died about seven years after; and Henry, on pretence of being guardian to his son and daughter-in-law, put himself in possession of that principality, and annexed it to his other great dominions^N.

1159.

THE king had a prospect of making still farther acquisitions; and the activity of his temper allowed no opportunity of that kind to escape him. Philippa, dutchess of Guienne, mother of queen Eleanor, was the only issue of William IV. count of Thoulouse; and should have inherited his dominions, had not that prince, desirous of preserving the succession in the male line, conveyed the principality to his brother, Raymond de St. Gilles, by a contract of sale which was in that age regarded as fictitious and illusory. By this means, the title to the county of Thoulouse came to be disputed between the male and female heirs, and the one or the other, as opportunities favoured them; had obtained possession. Raymond, grandson of Raymond de St. Gilles, was the reigning sovereign; and on Henry's reviving his wife's claim,

^M M. Paris, p. 68. M. West. p. 248. Trivet, p. 35.
^N Hoveden, p. 51. Neubr. p. 396. Chron. W. Heining.
p. 496.

claim, this prince had recourse for protection to the king of France, who was so much concerned in policy to prevent the farther aggrandizement of the English monarch. Lewis himself, when married to Eleanor, had asserted the justice of her claim, and had demanded possession of Thoulouse^o; but his sentiments changing with his interest, he now determined to defend, by his power and authority, the title of Alfonso. Henry found, that it would be requisite to support his pretensions against potent antagonists; and that nothing but a great army could maintain a claim, which he had in vain asserted by arguments and manifestoes.

C H A P.
VIII.
1159.

AN army, composed of feudal vassals, was commonly very intractable and undisciplined, both because of the independent spirit of the persons who served in it, and because the commands were not given either by the choice of the sovereign or from the military capacity and experience of the officers. Each baron conducted his own vassals: His rank was greater or less, proportioned to the extent of his property: Even the supreme command under the prince was often attached to birth: And as the military vassals were obliged to serve only forty days at their own charge; though, if the expedition was distant, they were put to great expence; the prince reaped very little benefit from their attendance. Henry, sensible of these inconveniences, levied upon his vassals in Normandy and other provinces, which were remote from Thoulouse, a sum of money in lieu of their service; and this commutation, by reason of the great distance, was still more advantageous, for his English vassals. He imposed, therefore, a scutage of three pounds on each knight's fee, a condition, to which, though it was unusual, and the first perhaps to be met with in history^p, the military tenants willingly submitted; and with this money, he levied an army which was more under his command, and whose service was more durable and constant. Assisted by Berenger, count of Barcelona, and Trincaval, count of Nismes, whom he had gained to his party, he invaded the county of Thoulouse; and after taking Verdun, Castelnau, and other places, he besieged the capital of the province, and was likely to prevail in the enterprize; when

^o Neubr. p. 387. Chron W. Heming. p. 494. ^p Pere Daniel, vol. i. 1216. Gervase, p. 1381.

- CHAP. when Lewis, advancing before the arrival of his main
VIII. body, threw himself into the place with a small reinforcement. Henry was urged by some of his ministers
1159. to prosecute the siege, to take Lewis prisoner, and to impose his own terms in the pacification; but he either thought it so much his interest to maintain the feudal principles, by which his foreign dominions were secured, or bore so much respect to his superior lord, that he declared he would not attack a place defended by him in person; and he immediately raised the siege ^Q. He marched into Normandy to protect that province against an incursion, which the count of Dreux, instigated by king Lewis, his brother, had made upon it. War was now openly carried on between the two monarchs, but produced no memorable event, and was stopped by a cessation of arms, and afterwards by a peace, which was not, however, attended with any confidence or good correspondence between these rival princes. The fortress of Gisors, being
1160. part of the dowry stipulated to Margaret of France, had been assigned by agreement to the knights templars, on condition that it should be delivered into Henry's hands, after the celebration of the nuptials. The king, that he might have a pretence for immediately demanding the place, ordered the marriage to be solemnized between the prince and princess, though both infants ^R; and he engaged the grand-master of the Temple, by large presents, as was generally suspected, to put him in possession of Gisors ^S. Lewis resenting this fraudulent conduct, banished, the templars from France, and would
1161. have made war upon the king of England, had it not been for the mediation and authority of Pope Alexander III. who had been chased from Rome by the antipope, Victor IV. and resided at that time in France. That we may form a notion of the authority possessed by the Roman pontiff during those ages, it may be proper to remark, that the two kings had, the year before, met the pope at the castle of Torci on the Loir; and they gave

^Q Fitz-Steph. p. 22. Diceto, p. 531. ^R Hoveden, p. 492. Newbr. p. 400. Diceto, p. 532. Brompton, p. 1450.

^S Since the first publication of this history, lord Lyttleton has published a copy of the treaty between Henry and Lewis, by which it appears, if there were no secret article, that Henry was not guilty of any fraud in this transaction.

gave him such marks of respect, that both dismounted from their horses to receive him, and holding each of them one of the reins of his bridle, walked on foot by his side, and conducted him in that submissive manner into the castle^T. 1161.

HENRY, soon after he had accommodated his differences with Lewis by the pope's mediation, returned to England; where he commenced an enterprize, which, though required by sound policy, and even conducted in the main with prudence, bred him infinite disquietude, involved him in great danger, and was not concluded without some loss and dishonour. 1162.

THE usurpations of the clergy, which had at first been gradual, were now become so rapid, and had mounted to such a height, that the contest between the regale and pontificale was really arrived at a crisis in England; and it became necessary to determine whether the king or the priests, particularly the archbishop of Canterbury, should be sovereign of the kingdom^A. The aspiring spirit of Henry, which gave inquietude to all his neighbours, was not likely to pay long a tame submission to the encroachments of subjects; and as nothing opens men's eyes so readily as their interest, he was in no danger of falling, in this respect, into that abject superstition, which retained his people in subjection. From the commencement of his reign, in the government of his foreign dominions, as well as of England, he had shewed a fixed purpose to repress clerical usurpations, and to maintain those prerogatives, which had been transmitted to him by his predecessors. During the schism of the papacy between Alexander and Victor, he had determined, for some time, to remain neuter; and when he was informed, that the archbishop of Rouen and the bishop of Mans had, from their own authority, acknowledged Alexander as legitimate pope, he was so enraged, that, though he spared the archbishop on account of his great age, he immediately issued orders for overthrowing the houses of the bishop of Mans and archdeacon of Rouen^B; and it was not till he had deliberately examined the

^T Thivet, p. 48. ^A Fitz-Stephen, p. 27. ^B Fitz-Stephen, p. 18. This conduct appears violent and arbitrary; but was

C H A P. the matter, by those views, which usually enter into the
VII. councils of princes, that he allowed that pontiff to exercise authority over any of his dominions. In England,
 1162 the mild character and advanced years of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, together with his merits in refusing to put the crown on the head of Eustace, son of Stephen, prevented Henry, during the life-time of that primate, from taking any measures against the multiplied encroachments of the clergy: But after his death, the king resolved to exert himself with more activity ^c; and that he might be secure against any opposition, he advanced to that dignity Becket, his chancellor, on whose compliance, he thought, he could entirely depend.

June 3. **Thomas a** Becket, the first man of English pedigree, who since the Norman conquest, had, during the course of Becket, a whole century, risen to any considerable station, was archbishop of born of reputable parents in the city of London; and Canterbury. being endowed both with industry and capacity, he early insinuated himself into the favour of archbishop Theobald ^d, and obtained from that prelate some preferments and offices. By their means, he was enabled to travel for farther improvement to Italy, where he studied the civil and canon law at Bologna ^e; and on his return, he appeared to have made such proficiency in knowledge, that he was promoted by his patron to the archdeaconry of Canterbury, an office of considerable trust and profit ^f. He was afterwards employed with success by Theobald in transacting business at Rome; and on Henry's accession, he was recommended to that monarch as worthy of farther preferment ^g. Henry, who knew that Becket had been in-

was suitable to the strain of administration in those days. His father, Geoffrey, though represented as a mild prince, set him an example of much greater violence. When Geoffrey was master of Normandy, the chapter of Seez presumed without his consent, to proceed to the election of a bishop; upon which he ordered all of them with the bishop elect to be castrated, and made all their testicles be brought him in a platter Fitz-Steph. p. 44. In the war of Thoulouse Henry laid a heavy and an arbitrary tax on all the churches within his dominions. See Epist. S. Thom. p. 232.

^c Fitz-Steph. p. 28. ^d Hist. Quadripartita, p. 6. M. Paris, p. 69. Newbr. p. 393. ^e Fitz-Steph. p. 12. Brompton, p. 1057. ^f Hist. Quadr. p. 6. M. Paris, p. 69. ^g Brompton, p. 1057. Gervase, p. 1377.

instrumental in supporting that resolution of the archbishop, which had tended so much to facilitate his own advancement to the throne, was already prepossessed in his favour; and finding, on farther acquaintance, that his spirit and abilities entitled him to any trust, he soon promoted him to the dignity of chancellor, one of the first civil offices in the kingdom. The chancellor, in that age, besides the custody of the great seal, had possession of all vacant prelacies and abbies; he was the guardian of all such minors and pupils as were the king's tenants; all baronies which escheated to the crown were under his administration; he was entitled to a place in council, even though he was not particularly summoned; and as he exercised also the office of secretary of state, and it belonged to him to countersign all commissions, writs, and letters-patent, he was a kind of prime minister, and was concerned in the dispatch of every business of importance^H. After obtaining this high office, Becket, as he advanced in favour, was made provost of Beverley, dean of Hastings, and constable of the Tower: He was put in possession of the honours of Eye and Berkham, large baronies that had escheated to the crown; and to compleat his grandeur, he was entrusted with the education of Prince Henry, the king's eldest son, and heir of the monarchy^I. The pomp of his retinue, the sumptuousness of his furniture, the luxury of his table, the munificence of his presents, corresponded to these great performances; or rather exceeded any thing, which England had ever before seen in any subject. His historian and secretary, Fitz-Stephen^K, mentions, among other particulars, that his apartments were every day in winter covered with clean straw or hay, and in summer with green rushes or boughs; lest the gentlemen who paid their court to him, and who could not, by reason of their great number, find a place at table, should soil their fine cloaths by sitting on a dirty floor^L. A great number of knights were retained

^H Fitz-Steph. p. 13.^I Fitz-Steph. p. 15. Hist. Quad.

p. 9, 14.

^K P. 15.^L John Baldwin held the manor of Oterarsfee in Aylebury of the king in soccage, by the service of finding litter for the king's bed, viz. in summer, grass or herbs, and two grey geese, and in winter straw and three eels, thrice in a year, if the king should come thrice in a year to Aylebury. Madox, Bar. Anglica, p. 247.

C H A P. tained in his service; the greatest barons were proud of
VIII being received at his table; his house was a place of edu-
 cation for the sons of the chief nobility; and the king
 himself frequently vouchsafed to partake of his entertain-
 1162. ments. As his way of life was splendid and opulent, his
 amusements and occupations were gay, and partook of
 the cavalier spirit, which, as he had only taken deacon's
 orders, he did not think unbecoming his character.
 He employed himself at leisure hours in hunting, hawk-
 ing, gaming and horsemanship; he exposed his person in
 several military actions^M; he carried over, at his own
 charge, seven hundred knights to attend the king in his
 wars at Thoulouse; in the subsequent wars on the fron-
 tiers of Normandy, he maintained, during forty days,
 twelve hundred knights, and four thousand of their train^N;
 and in an embassy to France, with which he was en-
 trusted, he astonished that court with the number and
 magnificence of his retinue.

HENRY, besides committing all his more important
 business to Becket's management, honoured him with his
 friendship and intimacy; and whenever he was disposed
 to relax himself by sports of any kind, he admitted his
 chancellor to the party^O. An instance of their fami-
 liarity is mentioned by Fitz-Stephens, which, as it shews
 the manners of the age, it may not be improper to re-
 late. One day, as the king and chancellor were riding
 together in the streets of London, they observed a beg-
 gar, who was shivering with cold. Would it not be very
 praise-worthy, said the king, to give that poor man a warm
 coat in this severe season? It would, surely, replied the
 chancellor; and you do well, Sir, in thinking of such
 good actions. Then he shall have one presently, cried
 the king: And seizing the skirt of the chancellor's coat
 began to pull it violently. The chancellor defended him-
 self for some time; and they had both of them like to
 have tumbled off their horses in the street, when Becket,
 after a vehement struggle, let go his coat; which the
 king bestowed on the beggar, who, being ignorant of
 the quality of the persons, was not a little surprized with
 the present^P.

BECKET,

^M Fitz-Stephen. p. 23. Hist. Quad. p. 9. ^N Fitz-
 Steph. p. 19, 20, 22, 23. ^O Fitz-Steph. p. 16. Hist. Quad.
 p. 8. ^P Fitz-Steph. p. 16.

BECKET, who, by his complaisance and good humour, had rendered himself agreeable, and by his industry and abilities useful, to his master, appeared to him the fittest person for supplying the vacancy made by the death of Theobald; and as he was well acquainted with the king's intentions ^Q of retrenching, or rather confining within the antient bounds, all ecclesiastical privileges, and shewed always a ready disposition to comply with them ^R, Henry, who never expected any resistance from that quarter, immediately issued orders for electing him archbishop of Canterbury. But this resolution, which was taken contrary to the opinion of Matilda, and many of the ministers ^S, drew after it very unhappy consequences; and never prince of so great penetration, appeared, in the issue, to have so little understood the genius and character of his minister.

No sooner was Becket installed in this high dignity, which rendered him for life the second person in the kingdom, with some pretensions of aspiring to be the first, than he totally altered his demeanor and conduct ^T, and endeavoured to retrieve the character of sanctity, of which his former busy and ostentatious course of life might, in the eyes of the people, have naturally bereaved him. Without consulting the king, he immediately returned into his hands the commission of chancellor ^U; pretending, that he must henceforth detach himself from secular affairs, and be solely employed in the exercise of his sacred function; but in reality, that he might break off all connexions with Henry, and apprise him, that Becket, as primate of England, was now become entirely a new personage. He maintained, in his retinue and attendants alone, his antient pomp and lustre, which was useful to strike the vulgar: In his own person he affected the greatest austerity, and most rigid mortification, which, he was sensible, would have an equal or a greater tendency to the same end. He wore sack-cloth next his skin, which, by his affected care to conceal it, was necessarily

^Q Fitz-Steph. p. 17. ^R Fitz-Steph. p. 23. Epist. St. Thom. p. 232. ^S Epist. St. Thom. p. 167. ^T M. Paris, p. 69. Neubr. p. 393. Diceto, p. 534. Gervase, p. 1383. ^U Hist. Quad. p. 32. M. Paris, p. 69. Diceto, p. 534.

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cessarily the more remarked by all the world^x: He changed it so seldom, that it was filled with dirt and vermin^y: His usual diet was bread; his drink water^z, which he even rendered farther unpalatable by the mixture of unsavoury herbs: He tore his back with the frequent discipline which he inflicted on it: He daily on his knees washed, in imitation of Christ, the feet of thirteen beggars, whom he afterwards dismissed with presents^a. He gained the affections of the monks by his frequent charities to the convents and hospitals: Every one who made profession of sanctity was admitted to his conversation, and returned full of panegyrics on the humility, as well as the piety and mortification, of the holy primate: He seemed to be perpetually employed in reciting prayers and pious lectures, or in perusing religious discourses: His aspect wore the appearance of seriousness, and mental recollection, and secret devotion: And all men of penetration plainly saw, that he was meditating some great design, and that the ambition and ostentation of his character had turned itself towards a new and more dangerous object.

1163.

Quarrel
between
the king
and Beck-
et.

BECKET waited not till Henry should commence those projects against the ecclesiastical power, which, he knew, had been formed by that prince: He was himself the aggressor; and endeavoured to overawe the king by the intrepidity and boldness of his enterprizes. He summoned the earl of Clare to surrender the barony of Tunbridge, which ever since the conquest, had remained in the family of that nobleman, but which, as it had formerly belonged to the see of Canterbury, the primate pretended his predecessors were prohibited by the canons to alienate. The earl of Clare, besides the lustre which he derived from the greatness of his own birth, and the extent of his possessions, was allied to all the chief families in the kingdom; his sister, who was a celebrated beauty, had farther extended his credit among the nobility, and was even supposed to have gained the king's affections; and Becket could not better discover, than by attacking so powerful an interest, his reso-

^x Fitz-Steph. p. 24. Hist. Quad. p. 17, 18. Hoveden, p. 520. Trivet, p. 42. ^y Fitz-Steph. p. 24. ^z Hoveden, p. 520. ^a Fitz-Steph. p. 25. Hist. Quad. p. 19.

resolution to maintain with vigour the rights, real or pretended, of his see^B. C H A P.
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WILLIAM de Eynsford, a military tenant of the crown, was patron of a living, which belonged to a manor that held of the archbishop of Canterbury; and Becket, without regard to William's right, presented, on a new and illegal pretext, one Laurence to that living, who was violently expelled by Eynsford. The primate, making himself, as was usual in spiritual courts, both judge and party, issued out, in a summary manner, the sentence of excommunication against Eynsford, who complained to the king, that he, who held in *capite* of the crown, should, contrary to the practice established by the Conqueror, and maintained ever since by his successors, be subjected to that terrible sentence, without the previous consent of the sovereign^C. Henry, who had now broken off all personal intercourse with Becket, sent him, by a messenger, his orders to absolve Eynsford; but received for answer, that it belonged not to the king to inform him whom he should absolve and whom excommunicate^D: And it was not till after many remonstrances and menaces, that Becket, though with the worst grace imaginable, was induced to comply with the royal mandate.

HENRY, though he found himself thus grievously mistaken in the character of the person whom he had promoted to the primacy, determined not to desist from his former intention of retrenching clerical usurpations. He was entirely master of his extensive dominions: The prudence and vigour of his administration, attended with perpetual success, had raised his character above that of any of his predecessors^E: The papacy seemed to be weakened by a schism, which divided all Europe: And he rightly judged, that, if the present favourable opportunity were neglected, the crown must, from the prevalent superstition of the people, be in danger of falling into an entire subordination under the mitre.

THE union of the civil and ecclesiastical powers serves extremely, in every civilized government, to the maintenance of peace and order; and prevents those mutual

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^B Fitz-Steph. 28. Gervase, p. 1384.^C M. Paris, p.

70. Diceto, p. 536.

^D Fitz-Steph. p. 28.^E Epist.

St. Thom. p. 130.

CHAP. incroachments, which, as there can be no ultimate judge
VIII. between them, are often attended with the most danger-
ous consequences. Whether the supreme magistrate,

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who unites these powers, receives the appellation of prince or prelate, it is not material: The superior weight, which temporal interests commonly bear in the apprehensions of men above spiritual, renders the civil part of his character most prevalent; and in time prevents those gross impostures and bigoted persecutions, which, in all false religions, are the chief foundation of clerical authority. But during the progress of ecclesiastical usurpations, the state, by the resistance of the civil magistrate, is naturally thrown into convulsions; and it behoves the prince, both for his own interest, and for that of the public, to provide in time sufficient barriers against so dangerous and insidious a rival. This precaution had been hitherto much neglected in England, as well as in other catholic countries; and affairs at last seemed to have come to a dangerous crisis: A sovereign of the greatest abilities was now on the throne: A prelate of the most inflexible and intrepid character was possessed of the primacy: The contending powers appeared to be armed with their full force, and it was natural to expect some extraordinary event to result from their rencounter.

AMONG their other inventions to obtain money, the clergy had inculcated the necessity of penance as an atonement for sin; and having again introduced the practice of paying them large sums as a commutation, or species of atonement, for the remission of these penances, the sins of the people, by these means, had become a revenue to the priests, and the king computed, that, by this invention alone, they levied more money from his subjects, than flowed, by all the funds and taxes, into the royal exchequer^F. That he might ease his subjects of so heavy and arbitrary an imposition, Henry required, that a civil officer of his appointment should be present in all ecclesiastical courts, and should, for the future, give his consent to every composition, which was made with sinners for their spiritual offences.

THE ecclesiastics, in that age, had renounced all immediate subordination to the magistrate: They openly

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^F Fitz-Stephen, p. 32.

tended to an exemption, in criminal accusations, from a trial before courts of justice; and were gradually introducing a like exemption in civil causes: Spiritual penalties alone could be inflicted on their offences: And as the clergy had extremely multiplied in England, and many of them were consequently of very low characters, crimes of the deepest dye, murders, robberies, adulteries, rapes, were daily committed with impunity by the ecclesiastics. It had been found, for instance, by enquiry, that no less than an hundred murders had, since the king's accession, been perpetrated by men of that profession, who had never been called to account for these offences^G; and holy orders were become a full protection for all enormities. A clerk in Worcester-shire, having debauched a gentleman's daughter, had, at this time, proceeded to murder the father; and the general indignation against this crime moved the king to attempt the remedy of an abuse which was become so palpable, and to require that the clerk should be delivered up, and receive condign punishment from the magistrate^H. Becket insisted on the privileges of the church; confined the criminal in the bishop's prison, lest he should be seized by the king's officers; maintained that no greater punishment could be inflicted on him than degradation: And when the king demanded, that, immediately after he was degraded, he should be tried by the civil powers, the primate asserted, that it was iniquitous to try a man twice upon the same accusation, and for the same crime^I.

HENRY, laying hold of so favourable a cause, resolved to push the clergy about all their privileges, which they had raised to an enormous height, and to determine at once those controversies, which daily multiplied, between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. He summoned an assembly of all the prelates of England; and he put to them this concise and decisive question, Whether or not they were willing to submit to the antient laws and customs of the kingdom? The bishops unanimously replied, that they were willing, *saving their own order*:

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^G Neubr. p. 394. ^H Fitz-Steph. p. 33. Hist. Quad. p. 32. ^I Fitz-Steph. p. 29. Hist. Quad. p. 33. 45. Hoveden, p. 492. M. Paris, p. 72. Diceto, p. 536, 537. Brompton, p. 1058. Gervase, p. 1384. Epist. St. Thom. p. 208, 209.

CHAP. order^k: A device by which they thought to elude the present urgency of the king's demand, and yet reserve to themselves, on a favourable opportunity, the power of resuming all their pretensions. The king was sensible of the artifice, and was provoked to the highest indignation. He left the assembly, with visible marks of his displeasure: He required the primate instantly to surrender the honours and castles of Eye and Berkham^l: The bishops were terrified, and expected still farther effects of his resentment. Becket alone was inflexible; and nothing but the interposition of the pope's legate and almoner, Philip, who dreaded a breach with so powerful a prince at so unseasonable a juncture, could have prevailed on him to retract the saving clause, and give a general and absolute promise of observing the antient customs^m.

BUT Henry was not content with a declaration in these general terms: He resolved, ere it was too late, to define expressly those customs, with which he required compliance, and to put a stop to clerical usurpations, before they were fully consolidated, and could plead antiquity, as they already did a sacred authority, in their favour. The claims of the church were open and visible. After a gradual and insensible progress through many centuries, the mask had at last been taken off, and several ecclesiastical councils, by their canons, which were pretended to be irrevocable and infallible, had positively defined those privileges and immunities, which gave such general offence, and appeared so dangerous to the civil magistrate. Henry therefore deemed it necessary to define with the same precision the limits of the civil power; to oppose his legal customs to their divine ordinances; to determine the exact boundaries of the rival jurisdictions; and for this purpose, he summoned a general council of the nobility and prelates at Clarendon, to whom he submitted this great and important question.

1164.
25th Jan.
Constitutions of Clarendon.

THE barons were all gained to the king's party, either by the reasons, which he urged, or by his superior authority:

^k Fitz-Steph. p. 31. Hist. Quad. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 492. Gervase, p. 1385. ^l Hist. Quad. p. 35. Gervase, p. 1385. ^m Hist. Quad. p. 37. Hoveden, p. 493. Gervase, p. 1385.

rity: The bishops were overawed by the general combination against them: And the following laws, commonly called the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, were voted without opposition by this assembly^N. It was enacted, that all suits concerning the advowson and presentation of churches should be determined in the civil courts: That the churches belonging to the king's fee, should not be granted in perpetuity without his consent: That clerks, accused of any crime, should be tried in the civil courts: That no person, particularly no clergyman of any rank, should depart the kingdom without the king's licence: That excommunicated persons should not be bound to give security for continuing in their present place of abode: That laics should not be accused in spiritual courts, except by legal and reputable promoters and witnesses: That no chief tenant of the crown should be excommunicated, nor his lands be put under an interdict, except with the king's consent: That all appeals in spiritual causes should be carried from the archdeacon to the bishop, from the bishop to the primate, from him to the king; and should be carried no farther without the king's consent: That if any law-suit arise between a layman and a clergyman concerning a tenement, and it be disputed whether the land be a lay or an ecclesiastical fee, it should first be determined by the verdict of twelve lawful men to what class it belonged, and if it be found to be a lay-fee, the cause should finally be determined in the civil courts: That no inhabitant in demesne, should be excommunicated for non-appearance in a spiritual court, till the chief officer of the place, where he resides, be consulted, that he may compel him by the civil authority to give satisfaction to the church: That the archbishops, bishops, and other spiritual dignitaries should be regarded as barons of the realm; should possess the privileges and be subjected to the burthens belonging to that rank; and should be bound to attend the king in his great councils, and assist at all trials, till the sentence, either of death or loss of members, be given against the criminal: That the revenue of the vacant sees should belong to the king; the chapter, or such of them as he shall summon, should sit in the king's chapel till they make the new election with his consent, and that the bishop-elect should do homage

^N Fitz-Steph. p. 33.

CHAP. homage to the crown: That if any baron or tenant *in capite* shall refuse to submit to the spiritual courts, the king should employ his authority in obliging him to make such submissions; if any of them throw off his allegiance to the king, the prelates should with their censures assist the king in reducing him: That goods, forfeited to the king, should not be protected in churches or church-yards: That the clergy should no more pretend to the right of enforcing payment of debts contracted by oath or promise; but should leave these law-suits, as well as others, to the determination of the civil courts; And that the sons of villains should not be ordained clerks, without the consent of their lord^o.

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THESE articles, to the number of sixteen, were calculated to prevent the chief abuses, which had prevailed in ecclesiastical affairs, and to put an effectual stop to the usurpations of the church, which, gradually stealing on, had threatened the total destruction of the civil power. Henry, therefore, by reducing these customs to writing, and collecting them in a body, endeavoured to prevent all future dispute with regard to them; and by passing so many ecclesiastical ordinances in a national and civil assembly, he fully established the superiority of the legislature above all papal decrees or spiritual canons, and gained a signal victory over the ecclesiastics. But as he knew, that the bishops, though overawed by the present combination of the crown and the barons, would take the first favourable opportunity of denying the authority, which had enacted these constitutions; he resolved, that they should all set their seal to them, and give a promise to observe them. None of the prelates dared to oppose his will; except Becket, who, though urged by the earls of Cornwall and Leicester, the barons of principal authority in the kingdom, obstinately withheld his consent. At last, Richard de Hastings, grand prior of the templars in England, threw himself on his knees before him; and with many tears, entreated him, if he paid any regard, either to his own safety or that of the church, not to provoke, by a fruitless opposition, the indignation of a great monarch, who was resolutely bent on

^o Hist. Quadr. p. 163. M. Paris, p. 70, 71. Spehn. Conc. vol. ii. p. 63. Gervase, p. 1386, 1387. Wilkins, p. 321.

on his purpose, and who was determined to take full revenge on every one, who should dare to oppose him^p. Becket, finding himself deserted by all the world, even by his own brethren, was at last obliged to comply; and he promised, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reserve*^q, to observe them; and took an oath to that purpose^r. The king, thinking that he had now finally prevailed in this great enterprize, sent the constitutions to pope Alexander, who then resided in France; and he required that pontiff's ratification of them: But Alexander, who plainly saw, that these laws were calculated to establish the independency of England on the papacy, and of the royal power on the clergy, condemned them in the strongest terms; abrogated, annulled, and rejected them^s. There were only six articles, the least important, which for the sake of peace, he was willing to ratify.

BECKET, when he observed, that he might hope for support in an opposition, expressed the deepest sorrow for his concessions; and endeavoured to engage all the other bishops in a confederacy to adhere to their common rights, and to the ecclesiastical privileges, in which he represented the interest and honour of God to be so deeply concerned. He redoubled his austerities in order to punish himself for his criminal compliance^t: He proportioned his discipline to the enormity of his supposed offence: And he refused to exercise any part of his archiepiscopal function, till he should receive absolution from the pope, which was readily granted him^u. Henry, informed of his present dispositions, resolved to take vengeance for this refractory behaviour; and he attempted to crush him, by means of that very power which Becket made such merit in supporting. He applied to the pope, that he should grant the commission of legate in his dominions to the archbishop of York; but Alexander, as politic as he, though he granted the commission, annexed a clause,

^p Hist. Quad. p. 38. Hoveden, p. 493. ^q Fitz-Steph. p. 35. Epist. S Thom. p. 25. ^r Fitz-Steph. p. 45. Hist. Quad p. 39. Gervase, p. 1386. ^s Fitz-Steph. p. 35. ^t Hist. Quadr. p. 40, 41. Hoveden, p. 493. M. Paris, p. 71. Gervase, p. 1388. Parker, p. 203. Epist. St. Thom. p. 40, 41.

clause, that it should not empower the legate to execute any act in prejudice of the archbishop of Canterbury^x: And the king, finding how fruitless such an authority would prove, sent back the commission by the same messengers who brought it^y.

THE primate, however, who found himself still exposed to the king's indignation, endeavoured twice to escape secretly from the kingdom but was as often detained by contrary winds^z: And Henry hastened to make him feel the effects of an obstinacy, which he deemed so criminal. He instigated John, marshal of the exchequer, to use Becket in the archiepiscopal court for some lands, part of the manor of Pageham; and to appeal from thence to the king's court for justice^a. On the day appointed for trying the cause, the primate sent four knights, to represent certain irregularities in John's appeal; and at the same time to excuse himself, on account of sickness, for not appearing personally that day in the court. This slight offence (if it even deserves that name) was represented as a grievous contempt; the four knights were menaced, and with difficulty escaped being sent to prison, as offering falsehoods to the court^c; and Henry, being determined to persecute Becket to the utmost, summoned at Northampton a great council, which he proposed to make the instruments of his vengeance against this inflexible prelate.

THE king had raised Becket from a low station to the highest offices, had honoured him with his countenance and friendship, had trusted to his assistance in forwarding his favourite project against the clergy; and when he found him become of a sudden his most rigid opponent, while every one beside complied with his will, rage at the disappointment, and indignation against such signal ingratitude, transported him beyond all bounds of moderation; and there seems to have entered more of passion than of justice or even of policy, in this violent prosecution^d. The barons, notwithstanding, in the great council voted whatever sentence he was pleased to dictate

^x Epist. St. Thom. p. 13, 14.

Gervase. p. 1388.

^z M. Paris, p. 72.

^a Diceto, p. 537.

P. 394.

^y Hoveden, p. 493.

^z Fitz-Steph. p. 35. Hist. Quad. p.

^a Hoveden, p. 494.

^c Fitz-Steph. p. 36.

^d Neubr.

tate to them; and the bishops themselves, who undoubtedly bore a secret favour to Becket, and regarded him as the martyr of their privileges, concurred with the rest, in the design of oppressing their primate. In vain did Becket urge, that his court was proceeding with the utmost regularity and justice in trying the marshal's cause, which, however, he said, would appear, from the sheriff's testimony, to be entirely unjust and iniquitous: That he himself had discovered no contempt of the king's court; but on the contrary, by sending four knights to excuse his absence, had virtually acknowledged its authority: That he also, in consequence of the king's summons, personally appeared at present in the great council, ready to justify his cause against the marshal, and to submit his conduct to their enquiry and jurisdiction: And that even should he be found to have been guilty of non-appearance, the laws had affixed a very slight penalty to that offence; and that, as he was an inhabitant of Kent, where his archiepiscopal palace was seated, he was by law entitled to some greater indulgence than usual in the rate of his fine^B. He was condemned, notwithstanding these pleas, as guilty of a contempt of the king's court, and as wanting in the fealty which he had sworn to his sovereign; all his goods and chattels were confiscated^F; and that this triumph over the church might be carried to the utmost, Henry, bishop of Winchester, the prelate who had been so powerful in the former reign, was, in spite of his remonstrances, obliged, by order of the court, to pronounce the sentence against him^G. The primate submitted to the decree; and all the prelates, except Gilbert, bishop of London, who paid court to the king by this singularity, became sureties for him^H. It is remarkable, that several Norman barons voted in this council; and we may conclude, with some probability, that a like practice had prevailed in many of the great councils summoned since the conquest. For the contemporary historian, who has given us a full account of these transactions, does not mention this circumstance as any wise singular^I; and Becket, in all his subsequent remonstrances with regard to the severe treatment, which he had

^B Fitz-Steph. p. 37, 42. ^F Hist. Quad. p. 47. Hoveden, p. 494. Gervase, p. 1389.

^G Fitz-Steph. p. 37.

^H Ibid. p. 37. ^I Ibid. p. 36.

C H A P. had met with, never founds any objection on an irregularity, which to us appears very palpable and flagrant. So little precision was there at that time in the government and constitution !

VIII.
1164-

THE king was not content with this sentence, however violent and oppressive. Next day, he demanded of Becket the sum of three hundred pounds, which the primate had levied from the honours of Eye and Berkham, while in his possession. Becket, after premising that he was not obliged to answer to this suit, because it was not contained in his summons; after remarking, that he had expended more than that sum in the repairs of these castles and of the royal palace at London; expressed however his resolution not to allow money to be any ground of quarrel between him and his sovereign: He agreed to pay the sum; and immediately gave sureties for it^K. In the subsequent meeting, the king demanded five hundred marks, which, he affirmed, he had lent Becket during the war at Thoulouse^L; and another sum to the same amount, for which that prince had been surety for him to a Jew. Immediately after these two claims, he started a third of still greater importance: He required him to give in the account of his administration while chancellor, and to pay the balance due from the revenues of all the prelaties, abbies, and baronies, which had, during that time, been subjected to his management^M. Becket observed, that as this demand was totally unexpected, he had not come prepared to answer it; but he required a delay, and promised in that case to give satisfaction. The king insisted upon sureties; and Becket desired leave to consult with his suffragans in a case of such importance^N.

It is apparent, from the known character of Henry, and from the usual vigilance of his government, that when he promoted Becket to the see of Canterbury, he was, on good grounds, well pleased with his administration in the former high office, with which he had entrusted him; and that even if that prelate had dissipated money beyond the income of his place, the king was satisfied that his expences were not blameable, and had in the
main

^K Fitz-Steph. p. 38. ^L Hist. Quad. p. 47. ^M Hoveden, p. 494. Diceto, p. 537. ^N Fitz-Steph. p. 38.

main been calculated for his service^o. Two years had since elapsed; no demands had during that time been made upon him; it was not till the quarrel arose concerning ecclesiastical privileges, that the claim was started, and the primate was, of a sudden, required to produce accounts of such intricacy and extent before a tribunal, which had shewn a determined resolution to ruin and oppress him. To find sureties, that he should answer to boundless and uncertain a claim, which in the king's estimation, amounted to 44,000 marks^p, was impracticable; and Becket's suffragans were extremely at a loss what council to give him, in such a critical emergency. By the advice of Winchester he offered two thousand marks as a general satisfaction for all demands: But this offer was rejected by the king^q. Some prelates exhorted him to resign his see, on condition of receiving an acquittal: Others were of opinion, that he ought to submit himself entirely to the king's mercy^r: But the primate, thus pushed to the utmost, had too much courage to sink under oppression: He determined to brave all his enemies, to trust to the sacredness of his character for protection; to involve his cause with that of God and religion, and to stand the utmost efforts of royal indignation.

AFTER a few days, spent in deliberation, Becket went to church and said mass, where he had previously ordered, that the introit to the communion service should begin with these words, *Princes sat and spake against me*; the passage appointed for the martyrdom of St. Stephen, whom the primate thereby tacitly pretended to resemble in his sufferings for the sake of righteousness^s. He went thence to court arrayed in his sacred vestments; and as soon as he arrived within the palace gates, he took the cross into his own hands, bore it aloft as his protection, and marched in that posture into the royal apartment^f. The king, who was in an inner room, was astonished at this parade, by which the primate seemed to menace him and his court with the sentence of excommunication;

^o Hoveden, p. 495. ^p Epist. St. Thom. p. 315. ^q Fitz-Steph. p. 38.

^r Fitz-Steph. 30. Gervase, p. 1390.

^s Hist. Quad. p. 53. Hoveden, p. 494. Neubr. p. 394. Gervase, p. 1391.

^f Fitz-Steph. p. 40. Hist. Quad. p. 53. Hoveden, p. 494. Neubr. p. 394. Epist. St. Thom. p. 43.

CHAP. tion; and he sent some of the prelates to remonstrate
 VIII. with him on account of such audacious behaviour. These
 1164. prelates complained to him, that, by subscribing, himself, to the constitutions of Clarendon, he had seduced them to imitate his example; and that now, when it was too late, he pretended to shake off all subordination to the civil power, and appeared desirous of involving them in the guilt, which must attend any violation of those laws, established by their consent, and ratified by their subscriptions^c. Becket replied, that he had indeed subscribed the constitutions of Clarendon, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reserve*, but in these words was virtually implied a salvo for the rights of their order, which, being connected with the cause of God and his church, could never be relinquished by their oaths and engagements: That if he and they had erred, in resigning the ecclesiastical privileges, the best atonement they could now make was to retract their consent, which in such a case could never be obligatory, and to follow the pope's authority, who had solemnly abrogated the constitutions of Clarendon, and had absolved them from all oaths, which they had taken to observe them: That a determined resolution was evidently embraced to oppress the church; the storm had first broke upon him; for a slight offence, and which too was even falsely imputed to him, he had been tyrannically condemned to a grievous penalty; a new and unheard of claim was since started, in which he could expect no justice; and he plainly saw that he was the destined victim, who, by his ruin, must prepare the way for the abrogation of all spiritual immunities: That he strictly inhibited them, who were his suffragans, from assisting any such trial, or giving their sanction to any sentence against him; he put himself, and his see under the protection of the supreme pontiff; and appealed to him against any penalty, which his iniquitous judges might think proper to inflict upon him: And that, however terrible the indignation of so great a monarch as Henry, his sword could only kill the body, while that of the church, entrusted in the hands of the primate, could kill the soul, and throw

^c Fitz-Steph. p. 35.

throw the disobedient into infinite and eternal perdition^H. C H A P. VIII.

APPEALS to the pope, even in ecclesiastical causes, had been abolished by the constitutions of Clarendon, and were become criminal by law; but an appeal in a civil cause, such as that of the king's demand upon Becket, was a practice altogether new and unprecedented; tended directly to the subversion of the government; and could receive no colour of excuse, except from the determined resolution, which was but too apparent, in the king and the great council to effectuate, without justice, but under the colour of law, the total ruin of the inflexible primate. The king, having now obtained so much a better pretext for his violence, would probably have pushed this affair to the utmost extremity against him; but Becket gave him no leisure to conduct the prosecution. He refused so much as to hear the sentence, which the barons, sitting apart from the bishops, and Banished to some sheriffs and barons of the second rank^I, ment of had given upon the king's claim: He departed from the Becket. palace; asked Henry's immediate permission to leave Northampton; and upon meeting with a refusal, he withdrew secretly; wandered about in disguise for some time; and at last took shipping and arrived safely at Gravelines^K.

THE violent and unjust prosecution of Becket had a natural tendency to turn the public favour on his side, and to make men forget his former ingratitude towards the king, and his departure from all oaths and engagements, as well as the enormity of those ecclesiastical privileges, of which he affected to be the champion. There were many other reasons, which procured him countenance and protection in foreign countries. Philip, earl of Flanders,

^H Fitz-Steph. p. 42, 44, 45, 46. Hist. Quad. p. 57. Hoveden, p. 495. M. Paris, p. 72. Epist. St. Thom. p. 45, 195.

^I Fitz-Steph. p. 46. This historian is supposed to mean the more considerable vassals of the chief barons: These had no title to sit in the great council, and the giving them a place there was a palpable irregularity: Which however is not insisted on in any of Becket's remonstrances. A new proof how little fixed the constitution was at that time!

^K Hist. Quad. p. 60, 63, 64, &c. Hoveden, p. 495. M. Paris, p. 72. Gervase, p. 1393.

ders^L, and Lewis, king of France^M, jealous of the rising greatness of Henry, were well pleased to give him disturbance in his government; and forgetting that this was the common cause of princes, they affected to pity extremely the condition of the exiled primate; and the latter even honoured him with a visit at Soissons, in which city he had invited him to fix his retreat^N. The pope, whose interests were more immediately concerned in supporting him, gave a bad reception to a magnificent embassy, which Henry sent to accuse him; while he put the greatest marks of distinction on Becket himself, who had come to Sens, in order to justify his cause before the sovereign pontiff^O. The king, in revenge, sequestered the revenues of Canterbury; and by a conduct, which might be esteemed arbitrary, had there been at that time any regular check on royal authority, he banished all the primate's relations and domestics, to the number of four hundred^P, whom he obliged to swear, before their departure, that they would instantly join their patron^Q. But this policy, by which Henry endeavoured to reduce Becket sooner to necessity, lost its effect: The pope, when they arrived beyond sea, absolved them from their oath, and distributed them among the convents in France and Flanders: A residence was assigned to Becket himself in the convent of Pontigny^R, where he lived for some years in great magnificence, partly from a pension granted him on the revenues of that abby, partly from remittances made him by the French monarch.

THE more to ingratiate himself with pope Alexander, Becket resigned into his hands the see of Canterbury, to which, he affirmed, he had been uncanonically elected, by the authority of the royal mandate^S; and Alexander in his turn, besides investing him anew with that dignity, pretended to abrogate by a bull the sentence which the great council of England had passed against him. Henry, after attempting in vain to procure a conference with the pope, who departed soon after for Rome, whither the pro-

^L Epist. St. Thom. p. 35. ^M Ib'd. p. 36, 37. ^N Hist. Quad. p. 76. ^O Fitz-Steph. p. 51. Hist. Quad. p. 72, 73, 77. Hoveden, p. 496. Gervase, p. 1393. Trivet, p. 46. ^P Epist. St. Thom. p. 766. ^Q Fitz-Steph. p. 51, 52. Hist. Quad. p. 82. ^R M. Paris, p. 72. ^S Fitz-Steph. p. 52. Hist. Quad. p. 79.

prosperous condition of his affairs now invited him; made provisions against the consequences of that breach, which impended between his kingdom and the apostolic see. He issued orders to his justiciaries, inhibiting, under severe penalties, all appeals to the pope or archbishop; forbidding any one to receive any mandates from them, or apply in any case to their authority; declaring it treasonable to bring from either of them an interdict upon the kingdom, and punishable, in secular clergymen, by the loss of their eyes and by castration, in regulars by amputation of their feet, and in laics with death; and menacing with sequestration and banishment the persons themselves, as well as their kindred, who should pay obedience to any such interdict: And he farther obliged all his subjects to swear to the observance of these orders^T. These were edicts of the utmost importance, affected the lives and properties of all the subjects, and even changed, for the time, the national religion, by breaking off all communication with Rome: Yet were they enacted by the sole authority of the king, and were derived entirely from his will and pleasure.

THE spiritual powers, which, in the primitive church, were, in a great measure, dependant on the civil, had by a gradual progress reached an equality and independence; and though the limits of the two jurisdictions were difficult to ascertain or define, it was not impossible, but, by moderation on both sides, government might still have been conducted, in that imperfect and irregular manner which attends all human institutions. But as the ignorance of the age encouraged the ecclesiastics daily to extend their privileges, and even to advance maxims totally incompatible with civil government^U; Henry had thought it high time to put an end to their pretensions, and formally, in a public council, to fix those powers, which belonged to the magistrate, and which he was for the future determined to maintain. In this attempt, he was led to recall customs, which, though antient^X, were beginning

^T Hist. Quad. p. 88, 167. Hoveden, p. 496. M. Paris, p. 73.

^U *Quis dubitet*, says Becket to the king, *sacerdotes Christi regum et principum omniumque fidelium patres et magistros censeri*. Epist. St. Thom. p. 97, 148.

^X Fitz-Steph. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 518. Epist. St. Thom. p. 265.

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beginning to be abolished by a contrary practice, and which were still more strongly opposed by the prevailing opinions and sentiments of the age. Principle, therefore, stood on the one side; power on the other; and if the English had been actuated by conscience, more than by present interest, the controversy must soon, by the general defection of Henry's subjects, have been decided against him. Becket, in order to forward this event, filled all places with exclamations against the violence which he had suffered ^Y. He compared himself to Christ, who had been condemned by a lay tribunal ^Z, and who was crucified anew in the present oppressions under which his church laboured: He took it for granted, as a point incontestible, that his cause was the cause of God ^A: He assumed the character of champion for the patrimony of the Divinity: He pretended to be the spiritual father of the king and all the people of England ^B: He even told Henry, that kings reign solely by the authority of the church ^C; and though he had thus torn off the veil more openly on the one side, than that prince had on the other, he seemed still, from the general favour borne him by the ecclesiastics, to have all the advantage in the argument ^D. The king, that he might employ the weapons of temporal power remaining in his hands, suspended the payment of Peter's pence ^E; he made advances towards an alliance with the emperor, Frederic Barbarossa, who was at that time engaged in violent wars with pope Alexander ^F; he discovered some intentions of acknowledging Pascal III. the present anti-pope, who was protected by that emperor ^G; and by these expedients he endeavoured to terrify the enterprising, though prudent pontiff, from proceeding to extremities against him.

BUT the violence of Becket, still more than the nature of the controversy, kept affairs from remaining long in

^Y Fitz-Steph. p. 53. Epist. St. Thom. p. 63, 64, 226.

^Z Epist. St. Thom. p. 63, 105, 194. ^A Epist. St. Thom. p. 29, 30, 31, 226. ^B Fitz-Steph. p. 46. Epist. St. Thom. p. 52, 148.

^C Brady's Append. No. 56. Epist. St. Thom. p. 94, 95, 97, 99, 197. Hoveden, p. 427.

^D Epist. St. Thom. p. 268, 611. ^E Epist. St. Thom. p. 219. ^F Hist. Quad. p. 88. Epist. St. Thom. p. 116, 139.

^G Epist. St. Thom. p. 106, 111, 112. M. Paris, p. 75. M. West. p. 249.

in-suspense between the parties. That prelate, instigated by revenge, and animated by the present glory attending his situation, pushed matters to a decision, and issued out a censure, excommunicating the king's chief ministers by name, and comprehending in general all those who favoured or obeyed the constitutions of Clarendon^H: These constitutions he abrogated and annulled; he absolved every one from the oaths which they had taken to observe them; and he suspended the spiritual thunder over Henry himself, only that the prince might avoid the blow by a timely repentance^I.

THE situation of Henry was so unhappy, that he could employ no expedient for saving his ministers from this terrible censure, but by appealing to the pope himself, and having recourse to a tribunal, whose authority he had himself attempted to abridge in this very article of appeals, and which, he knew, was so deeply engaged on the side of his adversary^K. But even this expedient was not likely to be long effectual. Becket had obtained from the pope a legatine commission over England^L; and in virtue of that authority, which admitted of no appeal^M, he summoned the bishops of London, Salisbury, and others, to attend him, and ordered, under pain of excommunication, the ecclesiastics, sequestered on his account, to be restored in two months to all their benefices^N. But John de Oxford, the king's agent at Rome, had the address to procure orders for suspending this sentence^O, and he gave the pontiff such hopes of a speedy reconciliation between the king and Becket, that two legates, William de Pavie and Otho, were sent to Normandy, where the king then resided, endeavoured to find expedients for that purpose^P. But the pretensions of the parties were, as yet, too opposite to admit of an accommodation: The king required, that all the constitutions

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of

^H Hoveden, p. 506. M. West, p. 249. Epist. St. Thom. p. 148, 149, 235, 240.

^I Fitz-Steph. p. 56. Hist. Quad. p. 93. M. Paris, p. 74. Beaulieu Vie de St. Thom. p. 213.

Epist. St. Thom. p. 149, 229. Hoveden, p. 499. ^K Epist. St. Thom. p. 166, 202, 203, 234.

^L Fitz-Steph. p. 55. Epist. St. Thom. p. 179.

^M Epist. St. Thom. p. 218.

^N Epist. St. Thom. p. 182, 183, 218, 219, 239.

^O Epist. St. Thom. p. 403, 404, 428.

^P Epist. St. Thom. p. 309.

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of Clarendon should be ratified & Becket, that, previously to any agreement, he and his adherents should be restored to their possessions^R: And as the legates had no power to pronounce a definitive sentence on either side, the negotiation soon after came to nothing^S. The cardinal de Pavie also, being much attached to Henry's interests, took care to protract the negotiation; to mitigate the pope, by the accounts which he sent of that prince's conduct; and to procure him every possible indulgence from the see of Rome. It was by his credit, that the king obtained about this time a dispensation for the marriage of his third son, Geoffrey, with the heiress of Brittany; a concession, which, considering Henry's demerits towards the church, gave great scandal both to Becket, and to his patron, the king of France.

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THE intricacies of the feudal law had, in that age, rendered the boundaries of power between the prince and his vassals, and between one prince and another, as precarious as those between the crown and the mitre; and all wars took their origin from disputes, which, had there been any tribunal possessed of power to enforce their decrees, ought only to have been decided before a court of judicature. Henry, in prosecution of some controversies, in which he was involved with the count of Auvergne, a vassal of the dutchy of Guienne, had invaded the territories of that count; who had recourse to the king of France, his superior lord, for protection, and thereby kindled a war between the two monarchs. But this war was, as usual, no less feeble in its operation, than it was frivolous in its cause and object; and after occasioning some depredations on each others territories^T, and some insurrections among the barons of Poitou and Guienne, was terminated by a peace; the terms of which were rather disadvantageous to Henry, and prove, that that prince had, by reason of his contests with the church, lost the superiority, which he had hitherto

^R Hoveden, p. 517. Epist. St. Thom. p. 345. ^R M. Paris, p. 74. Epist. St. Thom. p. 346, 349, 355. ^S Gervase, p. 1403. ^T Hoveden, p. 517. M. Paris, p. 75. Diceto, p. 547. Gervase, p. 1402, 1403. Robert de Monte.

hitherto maintained over the crown of France: An additional motive to him for accommodating those differences.

1167.

THE pope and the king began to perceive, that in the present situation of affairs, neither of them could expect a final and decisive victory over the other, and that they had more to fear than hope from the duration of the controversy. Though the vigour of Henry's government had confirmed his authority in all his dominions, his throne might be shaken by a sentence of excommunication; and if England itself could, by its situation, be more easily guarded against the contagion of superstitious prejudices, his French provinces at least, whose communication was open with the neighbouring states, would be much exposed, on that account to some great revolution or convulsion^U. He could not, therefore, reasonably imagine, that the pope, while he retained such a check upon him, would formally recognize the constitutions of Clarendon, which both put an end to papal pretensions in England, and would give an example to other estates of asserting a like independency^X. Pope Alexander, on the other hand, being still engaged in dangerous wars with the emperor Frederic, might justly apprehend, that Henry, rather than relinquish claims of such importance, would join the party of his enemy^Y; and as the trials hitherto made of the spiritual weapons by Becket had not succeeded to his expectation^Z, and every thing had remained quiet in all the king's dominions, nothing seemed impossible to the capacity and vigilance of so great a monarch. The disposition of minds on both sides, resulting from these circumstances, produced frequent attempts towards an accommodation; but as both parties knew, that the essential articles of the dispute could not then be terminated, they entertained a perpetual jealousy of each other, and were anxious not to lose the least advantage in the negotiation^A. The nuncios, Gratian and Vivian, having received a commission to endeavour a reconciliation, met with the king at Damfront in Normandy^B, and af-

A a 2

ter

^U Epist. St. Thom. p. 230. ^X Epist. St. Thom. p. 276.

^Y Fitz-Steph. p. 53. Hist. Quad. p. 75.

^Z Epist. St.

Thom. p. 241. 254. ^A M. Paris. p. 85.

^B M. Paris.

p. 78.

CHAPTER. ter all differences seemed to be adjusted, the king offered
 VIII. to sign the treaty, with a salvo to his royal dignity^C;
 which gave such umbrage to Becket, that the negotiation,
 1168. in the end, became fruitless, and the excommunications
 were renewed against the king's ministers. Another
 negotiation was conducted at Montmirail, in the pre-
 sence of the king of France and the French prelates;
 where Becket also offered to make his submissions, with a
 salvo of the honour of God, and the liberties of the church^D;
 which, for a like reason, was extremely offensive to the
 1169. king; and rendered the treaty abortive. A third con-
 ference, under the same mediation, was broke off, by
 Becket's insisting on the like reserve in his submissions;
 and even in a fourth treaty, when all the terms were
 adjusted, and when the primate expected to be intro-
 duced to the king, and to receive the kiss of peace, which
 it was usual for princes to grant in those times, and
 which was regarded as a sure pledge of forgiveness, Henry
 refused him that honour^E; upon pretence, that, during
 his anger, he had made a rash vow to that purpose.
 This formality served, among such jealous spirits, to pre-
 vent the conclusion of the treaty; and though the dif-
 ficulty was attempted to be overcome, by a dispensation
 which the pope granted Henry from his rash vow^F, that
 prince could not be prevailed on to depart from the reso-
 lution which he had taken.

IN one of these conferences, at which the French king
 was present, Henry said to that monarch: "There have
 " been many kings of England, some of greater, some
 " of less authority than myself: There have also been
 " many archbishops of Canterbury, holy and good men,
 " and entitled to every kind of respect: Let Becket but
 " act towards me with the same submission, which the
 " greatest of his predecessors have paid to the least of
 " mine, and there shall be no controversy between us^G."
 Lewis was so struck with this state of the case, and with
 an offer which Henry made to submit his cause to the
 French clergy, that he could not forbear condemning the pri-

^C Rymer vol. i. p. 29. Gervase, p. 1407. ^D Fitz-Steph.
 p. 58. Hist. Quad. p. 95. Diceto, p. 552. Gervase, p.
 1405. ^E Hist. Q. p. 102. M. Paris, p. 82. Gervase, p.
 1406. ^F Fitz-Steph. p. 68. ^G Hist. Quad. p. 95. Ger-
 vase, p. 1405.

primate, and withdrawing his friendship from him during some time: But their common animosity against Henry soon produced a renewal of their former good correspondence ^H. C H A P. VIII.

ALL difficulties were at last adjusted between the parties; and the king allowed Becket to return, on conditions which may be esteemed both honourable and advantageous to that prelate. He was not required to give up any rights of the church, or resign any of those pretensions, which had been the original ground of the controversy. It was agreed, that all these questions should be buried in oblivion; but that Becket and his adherents should, without making further submissions, be restored to all their livings ^I, and that even the possessors of such benefices as depended on the see of Canterbury, and had been filled during the primate's absence, should be expelled, and Becket have liberty to supply the vacancies ^K. In return for concessions, which entrenched so deeply on the honour and dignity of the crown, Henry reaped only the advantage of seeing his ministers absolved from the sentence of excommunication denounced against them, and of preventing the interdict, which, if these hard conditions had not been complied with, was ready to be laid on all his dominions ^L. It was easy to see how much he dreaded that event, when a prince of so high a spirit could submit to terms so dishonourable, in order to prevent it. 1170.
22d July.
Compromise with
Becket.

BUT the king attained not even that temporal tranquillity, which he had hoped to reap from this expedient. During the heat of his quarrel with Becket, while he was every day expecting an interdict to be laid on his kingdom, and even a sentence of excommunication to be denounced against his person, he had thought it prudent to have his son, prince Henry, associated with him in the royalty, and to make him be crowned king, by the hands of Roger archbishop of York ^M. By this precaution, he both ensured the succession of that prince, which, considering

^H Hist. Quad. p. 99, 100. Gervase, p. 1406. Parker, p. 206. ^I Gervase, p. 1413. ^K Fitz-Steph. p. 68, 69. Hoveden, p. 520. ^L Hist. Quad. p. 104. Brompton, p. 1062. Gervase, p. 1408. Epist. St. Thom. p. 704, 705, 706, 707, 792, 793, 794. Benedict Abbas, p. 70. ^M Hist. Quad. p. 102, 103. Gervase, p. 1408.

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considering the many past irregularities in that point, could not but be esteemed somewhat precarious; and he preserved at least his family on the throne, if the sentence of excommunication should have the effect which he dreaded, and should make his subjects renounce their allegiance to him^N. Though this design was conducted with the utmost expedition and secrecy, Becket, before it was carried into execution, had got intelligence of it; and being desirous to obstruct all Henry's measures, as well as anxious to prevent this affront to himself, who pretended a sole right, as archbishop of Canterbury, to officiate in the coronation, he had inhibited all the prelates of England from assisting at this ceremony^O, had procured a mandate to the same purpose from the pope^P, and had incited the king of France to protest against the coronation of young Henry, unless the princess, daughter of that monarch, should at the same time receive the royal unction. There prevailed in that age an opinion, which was akin to its other superstitions, that the royal unction was essential to the exercise of royal power^Q; and it was therefore natural both for the king of France, careful of his daughter the princess Margaret's establishment^R, and for Becket, jealous of his own dignity, to demand, in the treaty with Henry, some satisfaction in this essential point^S. Henry, after apologizing to Lewis for the omission with regard to Margaret, and excusing it on account of the secrecy requisite for conducting that measure, promised that the ceremony should be again renewed in the persons both of the prince and princess^T. And he assured Becket, that besides receiving the acknowledgments of Roger and the other bishops for the seeming affront put on the see of Canterbury, he should, as a farther satisfaction, recover his rights by officiating in this coronation^U. But the violent spirit of Becket, elated by the power of the church, and by the victory which he had already obtained over his sovereign, was not content with this voluntary compensation,

^N Fitz-Steph. p. 65. Pere Daniel, vol. i. p. 1247. ^O Epist. St. Thom. p. 684, 686. ^P Hist. Quad. p. 103. ^Q Epist. St. Thom. p. 682. Gervase, p. 1412. ^R Epist. St. Thom. p. 708. ^S Brompton, p. 1061. ^T Gervase, p. 408. ^U Hoveden, p. 518. ^U Epist. St. Thom. p. 803, 810.

1170.

Becket's
return
from ban-
ishment.

tion, but resolved to make the injury, which he pretended to have suffered, a handle for taking revenge on all his enemies. On his arrival in England, he met the archbishop of York and the bishops of London and Salisbury, who were on their journey to the king in Normandy; and he notified to the archbishop the sentence of suspension, and to the two bishops that of excommunication, which, at his solicitation, the pope had pronounced against them^x. Reginald de Warenne, and Gervase de Cornhill, two itinerant justiciaries, who were making their circuit in Kent, asked him, on hearing of this bold attempt, whether he meant to bring fire and sword into the kingdom^y? But the primate, heedless of the reproach, proceeded, in the most ostentatious manner, to take possession of his diocese. In Rochester, and all the towns through which he passed, he was received with shouts and acclamations of the people^z. As he approached Southwark, the clergy, the laity, men of all ranks and ages, came forth to meet him, and celebrated with hymns of joy his triumphant entrance^a. And though he was obliged, by orders of the young prince, who resided at Woodstock, to return to his diocese, he found that he was not mistaken, when he promised himself the highest veneration of the public towards his person and his dignity. He proceeded, therefore, with the more courage to dart his spiritual thunders; and he issued the sentence of excommunication against Robert de Broc^b, and Nigel de Sackville, with many of the most considerable prelates and ministers, who had assisted at the coronation of the young prince, and had been active in the late persecution of the exiled clergy. This violent measure, by which he, in effect, denounced war against the king himself, is commonly ascribed to the vindictive disposition and imperious character of Becket; but as this prelate was also a man of acknowledged abilities, we are not, in his passions alone, to look for the cause of his conduct, when

^x M. Paris, p. 86. Chron. W. Heming, p. 497. Diceto, p. 553. Brompton, p. 1062. Gervase, p. 1413. M. West, p. 250. Epist. St. Thom. p. 816, 849. ^y Fitz-Steph. p. 73. Hist. Quad. p. 112. Beaulieu Vie de St. Thom. p. 395. ^z Hist. Quad. p. 113. Beaulieu Vie de St. Thom. p. 397. Epist. St. Thom. p. 132. ^a Fitz-Steph. p. 75. Hist. Quad. p. 117. ^b Hoveden, p. 540. Diceto, p. 555.

CHAP. VIII. when he proceeded to these extremities against his enemies. His sagacity had led him to discover all Henry's intentions; and he purposed, by this bold and unexpected assault, to prevent the execution of them.

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THE king, from his experience of the dispositions of his people, was become sensible, that his enterprize had been too bold, in establishing the constitutions of Clarendon, in defining all the branches of royal power, and in endeavouring to extort from the church of England, as well as from the pope, an express avowal of these disputed prerogatives. Conscious also of his own violence, in attempting to break or subdue the inflexible primate, he was not displeased to undo that measure, which had given his enemies such advantage against him; and he was contented, that the controversy should terminate in that ambiguous manner, which was the utmost that princes, in those ages, could hope to attain in their disputes with the see of Rome. Though he dropped, for the present, the prosecution of Becket, he still reserved to himself the right of maintaining, that the constitutions of Clarendon, the original ground of the quarrel, were both the antient customs and the present law of the realm: And though he knew, that the papal clergy asserted them to be impious in themselves, as well as abrogated by the sentence of the sovereign pontiff, he proposed, in spite of their clamours, steadily to put those laws in execution^c, and to trust to his own ability, and to the course of events, for success in that perilous enterprize. He hoped, that Becket's experience of a six years' exile would, after his pride was fully gratified by his restoration, be sufficient to teach him more reserve in his opposition; or if any controversy arose, he expected thenceforth to engage in a more favourable cause, and to maintain with advantage, while the primate was now in his power^d, the antient and undoubted customs of the kingdom against the usurpations of the clergy. But Becket, determined not to betray the ecclesiastical privileges by his connivance^e, and apprehensive lest a prince of such profound policy, if allowed to proceed in his own way, might probably in the end prevail, resolved to take all the advantage which his present victory gave him, and to disconcert the cau-
tious

^c Epist. St. Thom. p. 837. 839.

^d Fitz-Steph. p. 65.

^e Epist. St. Thom. p. 345.

tious measures of the king, by the vehemence and rigour of his own conduct^Y. Assured of support from Rome, he was little intimidated by dangers, which his courage taught him to despise, and which, even if attended with the most fatal consequences, would serve only to gratify his ambition and thirst of glory^Z.

WHEN the suspended and excommunicated prelates arrived at Baieux, where the king then resided, and complained to him of the violent proceedings of Becket^A, he instantly perceived the consequences; was sensible, that his whole plan of operations was overthrown; foresaw, that the dangerous contest between the civil and spiritual powers, a contest which he himself had first roused, but which he had endeavoured, by all his late negotiations and concessions, to appease, must come to an immediate and decisive issue; and he was thence thrown into the most violent commotion^B. The archbishop of York remarked to him, that, so long as Becket lived, he could never expect to enjoy peace or tranquillity^C; and the king himself, being vehemently agitated, burst forth into an exclamation against his servants, whose want of zeal, he said, had so long left him exposed to the enterprizes of that ungrateful and imperious prelate^D. Four gentlemen of his household, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Traci, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, taking these passionate expressions to be a hint for Becket's death, immediately communicated their thoughts to each other; and swearing to avenge their prince's quarrel, secretly withdrew from court^E. Some menacing expressions, which they had dropped, gave a suspicion of their design; and the king dispatched a messenger after them, charging them to attempt nothing against the person of the primate^F: But these orders arrived too late to prevent their fatal purpose. The four assassins, though they took different roads to England, arrived nearly about the same time at Saltwoode near Canterbury^G; and being there

^Y Fitz-Steph. p. 74.

^Z Epist. St. Thom. p. 818, 848.

^A Hist. Quad. p. 115. Brompton, p. 1062. Gervase, p. 1414.

^B Hist. Quad. p. 119. Neubr. p. 401. Trivet, p. 52.

^C Fitz-Steph. p. 78. ^D Gervase, p. 1414. Parker, p. 207.

^E M. Paris, p. 86. Brompton, p. 1063. Benedict. Abbas, p. 10.

^F Hist. Quad. p. 144. Trivet, p. 55.

^G Fitz-Steph. p. 78, 79. Hist. Quad. p. 120.

CHAP. there joined by some assistants, they proceeded in great haste to the archiepiscopal palace ^H. They found the

VIII.

1170.

Dec. 29.
Murder
of Tho-
mas a
Becket.

primate, who trusted entirely to the sacredness of his character, very slenderly attended; and though they threw out many menaces and reproaches against him ^I, he was so incapable of fear, that, without using any precautions against their violence, he immediately went to St. Benedict's church, to hear vespers. They followed him thither, attacked him before the altar, and having cloven his head with many blows, retired without meeting any opposition ^K. This was the tragical end of Thomas a Becket, a prelate of the most lofty, intrepid, and inflexible spirit, who was able to cover, to the world and probably to himself, the enterprizes of pride and ambition, under the disguise of sanctity and of zeal for the interests of piety and religion: An extraordinary personage, surely, had he been allowed to remain in his first station, and had directed the vehemence of his character to the support of law and justice; instead of being engaged, by the prejudices of the times, to sacrifice all private duties and public connexions to ryes, which he imagined; or represented, as superior to every civil and political consideration. But no man, who enters into the genius of that age, can reasonably doubt of this prelate's sincerity. The spirit of superstition was so prevalent, that it infallibly caught every careless reasoner, much more every one whose interest, and honour, and ambition, were engaged to support it. All the wretched literature of the times was insisted on that side: Some faint glimmerings of common sense might sometimes pierce through the thick cloud of ignorance, or what was worse, the illusions of perverted science, which had blotted out the sun, and enveloped the face of nature: But those who preserved themselves untainted by the general contagion, proceeded on no principles which they could pretend to justify: They were beholden more to their total want of instruction, than to their knowledge, if they still retained some share of understanding: Folly was possessed of all the schools as well as all the churches; and her votaries assumed the garb of philosophers together with the ensigns of

^K Gervase, p. 1414.

^K Hoveden, p. 520.

^I Neubr. p. 401. Diceto, p. 555.

of spiritual dignities. Throughout that large collection of letters, which bears the name of St. Thomas, we find, in all the retainers of that aspiring prelate, no less than in himself, a most entire and absolute conviction of the reason and piety of their own party, and a disdain of their antagonists; nor is there less cant and grimace in their stile, when they address each other, than when they compose manifestos for the perusal of the public. The spirit of revenge, violence, and ambition, which accompanied their conduct, instead of forming a presumption of hypocrisy, are the surest pledges of their sincere attachment to a cause, which so much flattered these domineering passions.

HENRY, on the first report of Becket's violent measures, had proposed to have him arrested, and had already taken some steps towards the execution of that design. But the intelligence of his murder threw that prince into the utmost consternation, and he was immediately sensible of the dangerous consequences, which he had reason to apprehend from so unexpected an event. An archbishop of reputed sanctity, assassinated before the altar, in the exercise of his function, and on account of his zeal in maintaining ecclesiastical privileges, must attain the highest honours of martyrdom: while his murderer would be ranked among the most bloody tyrants, that ever were exposed to the hatred and detestation of mankind. Interdicts and excommunications, weapons in themselves so terrible, would, he foresaw, be armed with double force; when employed in a cause so much calculated to work on the human passions, and so peculiarly adapted to the eloquence of popular preachers and declaimers. In vain would he plead his own innocence, and even his total ignorance of the fact: He was sufficiently guilty, if the church thought proper to esteem him such: And his concurrence in Becket's martyrdom, becoming a religious opinion, would be received with all the implicit credit, which belonged to the most established articles of faith. These considerations gave the king the most unaffected concern; and as it was extremely his interest to clear himself of all suspicion, he took no care to conceal the depth of his affliction. He shut himself up from the light of

^A Ypod. Neust. p. 447. M. Paris, p. 87. Diceto, p. 556. Gervase, p. 1419.

CHAP. of day and from all commerce with his servants: He
 VIII. even refused three days all food and sustenance ^B: The
 1170. courtiers, apprehending some dangerous effects from his
 despair, were at last obliged to break in upon his solitude;
 and they employed every topic of consolation, induced
 him to accept of nourishment, and occupied his leisure in
 taking precautions against the consequences, which he so
 justly apprehended from the murder of the primate.

1171.
 and sub-
 mission of
 the king.

THE point of chief importance to Henry was to con-
 vince the pope of his innocence; or rather to persuade
 him, that he would reap greater advantages from the sub-
 missions of England than from proceeding to extremities
 against that kingdom. The archbishop of Rouen, the
 bishops of Worcester, and Evreux, with five others of
 less quality, were immediately dispatched to Rome ^C, and
 orders were given them to perform their journey with the
 utmost expedition. Though the name and authority of
 the court of Rome were so terrible in the remote coun-
 tries of Europe, which were sunk in profound ignorance,
 and were entirely unacquainted with its character and
 conduct; the pope was so little revered at home, that his
 inveterate enemies surrounded the gates of Rome itself,
 and even controuled his government in that city; and the
 ambassadors, who, from a distant extremity of Europe,
 carried to him the humble, or rather abject submissions of
 the greatest potentate of the age, found the utmost diffi-
 culty to make their way to him, and to throw themselves
 at his feet. It was at last agreed, that Richard Barre,
 one of their number, should leave the rest behind, and
 run all the hazards of the passage ^D, in order to prevent
 the fatal consequences which might ensue from any delay
 in giving satisfaction to his Holiness. He found on his ar-
 rival, that Alexander was already wrought up to the great-
 est rage against the king, that Becket's partizans were
 daily stimulating him to revenge, that the king of France
 had exhorted him to fulminate the most dreadful sentence
 against England ^E, and that the very mention of Henry's
 name before the sacred college was received with every
 expres-

^B Hist. Quad. p. 143. ^C Hoveden, p. 526. M. Paris,
 p. 87. ^D Hoveden, p. 526. Epist. St. Thom. p. 863.
^E Hoveden, p. 523. Spel. Concil. vol. ii. p. 89. Brompton,
 p. 1065. Epist. St. Thom. p. 855. Benedictus Abbas, p.
 13.

expression of horror and execration ^F. The Thursday before Easter was now approaching, when it is customary for the pope to denounce annual curses against all his enemies; and it was expected, that Henry should, with all the preparations peculiar to the discharge of that sacred artillery, be solemnly comprehended in the number ^G. But Barre found means to appease the pontiff, and to deter him from a measure which, if it failed of success, could not afterwards be easily recalled: The anathemas were only levelled in general against all the actors, accomplices, and abettors of Becket's murder ^H; and the abbot of Valasse, and the archdeacons of Salisbury and Lisieux, with others of Henry's ministers, who soon after arrived, besides maintaining their prince's innocence, made oath before the whole consistory, that he would stand to the pope's judgment in the affair, and make every submission that should be required of him ^I. The terrible blow was thus artfully eluded; the cardinals Albert and Theodin were appointed legates to examine the cause, and were ordered to proceed to Normandy for that purpose ^K; and though Henry's foreign dominions were already laid under an interdict by the archbishop of Sens, Becket's great partizan ^L, and the pope's legate in France, the expectation, that the monarch would easily exculpate himself from any concurrence in the guilt, kept every one in suspense, and prevented all the bad consequences, which might be dreaded from that sentence.

THE clergy, mean while, though their rage was happily diverted from falling on the king, were not idle in magnifying the sanctity of Becket; in extolling the merits of his martyrdom; and in exalting him above all that devoted tribe, who, in several ages, had, by their blood, cemented the fabric of the temple. Other saints had only borne testimony in their sufferings to the general doctrines of Christianity; but Becket had sacrificed his life.

^F Hoveden, p. 526. Neubr. p. 402. Epist. St. Thom. p. 864. ^G Hoveden, p. 527. Diceto, p. 556. Epist. St. Thom. p. 864. ^H Gervase, p. 1419. ^I Diceto, p. 557. Gervase, p. 1419. Epist. St. Thom. p. 865, 867. ^K Hoveden, p. 526. Neubr. p. 402. Gervase, p. 1419. Hist. Quad. p. 147. ^L Hoveden, p. 523. Spelm. Concil. vol. ii. p. 90.

CHAP. VIII

1171.

life to the power and privileges of the clergy; and this peculiar merit challenged, and not in vain, a suitable acknowledgment to his memory. Endless were the panegyrics on his virtues; and the miracles, operated by his reliques, were more numerous, more nonsensical, and more impudently attested, than those which ever filled the legend of any confessor or martyr. Two years after his death he was canonized by pope Alexander ^M; a solemn jubilee was established for celebrating his merits; his body was removed to a magnificent shrine, enriched with presents from all parts of Christendom; pilgrimages were performed to obtain his intercession with heaven; and it was computed, that in one year, above an hundred thousand pilgrims arrived in Canterbury, and paid their devotions at his tomb. It is indeed a mortifying reflection to those who are actuated by the love of fame, so justly denominated the last infirmity of noble minds, that the wisest legislator and most exalted genius, that ever reformed or enlightened the world, can never expect such tributes of praise, as are lavished on the memory of a pretended saint, whose whole conduct was probably, to the last degree, odious or contemptible, and whose industry was entirely directed to the pursuit of objects pernicious to mankind. It is only a conqueror, a personage no less intitled to our hatred, who can pretend to the attainment of equal renown and glory.

It may not be amiss to remark, before we conclude this subject of Thomas a Becket, that the king, during his controversy with that prelate, was on every occasion more anxious than usual to express his zeal for religion, and to avoid all appearance of a profane negligence on that head. He gave his consent to the imposing a tax on all his dominions for the delivery of the holy land, now threatened by the famous Saladine; and this tax amounted to two-pence a pound for one year, and a penny a pound for the four subsequent ^N. Almost all the princes of Europe laid a like imposition on their subjects, which received the name of Saladine's tax. During this period, there came over from Germany about thirty heretics of both sexes, under the direction of one Gerard; simple ignorant people, who could give no account of their faith, but

^M Epist. St. Thom. p. 880. Diceto, p. 569. ^N Chron. Gervase, p. 1399. M. Paris, p. 74.

but declared themselves ready to suffer for the tenets of their master. They made only one convert in England, a woman as ignorant as themselves; yet they gave such umbrage to the clergy, that they were delivered over to the secular arm, and were punished by being burned on the forehead, and then whipped through the streets. They seemed to exult in their sufferings, and as they went along, sung the beatitude, *Blessed are ye, when men hate you and persecute you*^o. After they were whipped, they were thrust out almost naked in the midst of winter, and perished through cold and hunger; no one daring, or being willing, to give them the least relief. We are ignorant of the particular principles of these people: For it would be imprudent to rely on the representations left of them by the clergy, who affirm, that they denied the efficacy of the sacraments, and the unity of the church. It is probable, that their departure from the standard of orthodoxy was still more subtle and minute. They seem to have been the first that ever suffered for heresy in England.

As soon as Henry found, that he was in no immediate danger from the thunders of the vatican, he undertook an expedition against Ireland; a design, which he had long projected, and by which he hoped to recover his credit, somewhat impaired in his late transactions with the hierarchy.

CHAP.

o Neubr. p. 391. M. Paris, p. 74. Heming. p. 494.

CHAP. IX.

HENRY II.

State of Ireland—Conquest of that island—The king's accommodation with the court of Rome—Revolt of young Henry and his brothers—Wars and insurrections—War with Scotland—Penance of Henry for Becket's murder—William, king of Scotland, defeated, and taken prisoner—The king's accommodation with his sons—The king's equitable administration—Crusades—Revolt of prince Richard—Death and character of Henry—Miscellaneous transactions of his reign.

CHAP.

IX.

1172.
State of
Ireland.

AS Britain was first peopled from Gaul, so was Ireland probably from Britain; and the inhabitants of all these countries seem to have been so many tribes of the Celtæ, who derive their origin from an antiquity, that lies far beyond the records of any history or tradition. The Irish, from the beginning of time, had been buried in the most profound barbarism and ignorance; and as they were never conquered or even invaded by the Romans, from whom all the western world derived its civility, they continued still in the most rude state of society, and were distinguished only by those vices, to which human nature, not tamed by education nor restrained by laws, is for ever subject. The small principalities, into which they were divided, exercised perpetual rapine and violence against each other; the uncertain succession of their princes was a continued source of domestic convulsions; the usual title of each petty sovereign was the murder of his predecessor; courage and force, though exercised in the commission of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues; and the most simple arts of life, even tillage and agriculture, were almost wholly unknown among them. They had felt the invasions of the Danes and the other northern people; but these inroads which had spread barbarism in the other northern parts of Europe, tended rather to improve the Irish; and the only towns, which were to be found in the island, had been planted along the coast by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inha-

inhabitants exercised pasturage in the open country, sought protection from any danger in their forests and morasses; and being divided by the fiercest animosities against each other, were still more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on the expedients for common or even for private interest.

BESIDES many small tribes, there were in the age of Henry II. five principal sovereignties in the island, Munster, Leinster, Meath, Ulster, and Connaught; and as it had been usual for the one or the other of these to take the lead in their wars, there was commonly some prince, who seemed, for the time, to act as monarch of Ireland. Roderic O Connor, king of Connaught, was then advanced to this dignity^p; but his government, ill obeyed even within his own territory, was not capable of uniting the people in any measures, either for the establishment of order, or for defence against foreigners. The ambition of Henry had, very early in his reign, been moved, by the prospect of these advantages, to attempt the subjection of Ireland; and a pretence was only wanting to invade a people, who, being always confined to their own island, had never given any reason of complaint to any of their neighbours. For this purpose, he had recourse to Rome, which assumed a right to dispose of kingdoms and empires; and not foreseeing the dangerous disputes, which he was one day to maintain with that see, he helped, for present, or rather for an imaginary, convenience, to give sanction to claims which were now become dangerous to all sovereigns. Adrian III. who then filled the papal chair, was by birth an Englishman; and being, on that account, disposed to oblige Henry, he was easily persuaded to act as master of the world, and to make without any hazard or expence, the acquisition of a great island to his spiritual jurisdiction. The Irish had, by precedent missions from the Britains, been imperfectly converted to Christianity, and what the pope regarded as the surest mark of their imperfect conversion, they followed the doctrines of their first teachers, and had never acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome. Adrian, therefore, in the year 1156, issued a bull in favour of Henry; in which, after premising, that that prince had ever shewn an anxious care to enlarge the church of God

WOL. I. B. b on

^p Hoveden, p. 527.

CHAP. on earth, and to encrease the number of his saints and elect in heaven; he represents his design of subduing Ireland as derived from the same pious motives: He considers his care of applying previously for the apostolic sanction as a sure earnest of success and victory; and having established it as a point incontestible, that all Christian kingdoms belong to the patrimony of St. Peter, he acknowledges it to be his own duty to sow among them the seeds of the gospel, which might in the last day fructify to their eternal salvation: He exhorts the king to invade Ireland, in order to extirpate the vice and wickedness of the natives, and oblige them to pay yearly, from every house a penny to the see of Rome: He gives him entire right and authority over the island, commands all the inhabitants to obey him as their sovereign, and invests with full power all such godly instruments as he should think proper to employ in an enterprize, thus calculated for the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men^Q. Henry, though armed with this authority, did not immediately put his design in execution; but being detained by more interesting business on the continent, waited for a favourable opportunity of invading Ireland.

DERMOT Macmorrogh, king of Leinster, had by his licentious tyranny, rendered himself extremely odious to his subjects, who seized with alacrity the first occasion that offered, of throwing off the yoke, which was become grievous and oppressive to them. This prince had formed a design on Omach, wife of Oronic, king of Meath; and taking advantage of her husband's absence, who, being obliged to visit a distant part of his dominions, had left his queen secure, as he thought, in an island, surrounded by a bog, he suddenly invaded the place, and carried off the princess^R. This exploit, though usual among the Irish, and rather esteemed a proof of gallantry and spirit^S, provoked the resentment of the husband; who, having collected forces, and being strengthened by the alliance of Roderic, king of Connaught, invaded the dominions of Dermot, and expelled him from his kingdom. The exiled prince had re-

^Q M. Paris, p. 67. Girald. Cambr. Spelm. Concil. vol. ii. p. 51. Rymer. vol. i. p. 15. ^R Girald. Cambr. p. 760. ^S Spencer, vol. vi.

recourse to Henry, who was at this time in Guienne, craved his assistance to restore him to his sovereignty, and offered, in that case, to hold his kingdom in vassalage of the crown of England. Henry, whose views were already turned towards making acquisitions in Ireland, readily accepted the offer; but being at that time embarrassed by the rebellions of his French subjects, as well as by his disputes with the see of Rome, he declined for the present embarking in the enterprize, and gave Dermot no farther assistance than letters patent, by which he empowered all his subjects to aid the Irish prince in the recovery of his dominions^T. Dermot, supported by this authority, came to Bristol; and after endeavouring, though for some time in vain, to engage adventurers in the enterprize, he at last formed a treaty with Richard, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul. This nobleman, who was of the illustrious house of Clare, had impaired his estate by expensive pleasures; and being ready for any desperate undertaking, he promised assistance to Dermot, on condition of his espousing Eva, the daughter of that prince, and being declared heir of all his dominions^U. While Richard was assembling his succours, Dermot went into Wales; and meeting with Robert Fitz-Stephen, constable of Abertivi, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, he also engaged them in his service, and obtained their promise of invading Ireland. Being now assured of assistance, he returned privately to his own state; and lurking in the monastery of Fernes, which he had founded (for this ruffian was also a founder of monasteries) he prepared every thing for the reception of his English allies^X.

The troops of Fitz-Stephen were first ready. That Conquest gentleman landed in Ireland with an hundred and thirty of that knights, sixty esquires, and three hundred archers; but island. this small body, being brave men, not unacquainted with discipline, and compleatly armed, a thing almost unknown in Ireland, struck a great terror into the barbarous inhabitants, and seemed to menace them with some signal revolution. The conjunction of Maurice de Prendergast, who, about the same time, brought over ten knights

B b 2

and

^T Girald. Cambr. p. 760.^U Girald. Cambr. p. 761.^X Girald. Cambr. p. 761.

CHAP. and sixty archers, enabled Fitz-Stephen to attempt the
 IX. siege of Wexford, a town inhabited by the Danes; and
 1172. after gaining a battle, he made himself master of the
 place¹. Soon after, Fitz-Gerald arrived with ten
 knights, thirty esquires, and a hundred archers²; and
 being joined by the former adventurers, composed a force
 which nothing in Ireland was able to withstand. Roderic,
 the chief monarch of the island, was defeated in battle;
 the prince of Ossory was obliged to submit, and give
 hostages for his peaceable behaviour; and Dermot, not
 content with being restored to his kingdom of Leinster,
 projected the dethronement of Roderic, and aspired to
 the sole dominion of the island.

In prosecution of these views, he sent over a mes-
 senger to the earl of Strigul, challenging the performance
 of his promise, and displaying the mighty advantages
 which might now be reaped by a small reinforcement of
 warlike troops from England. Richard, not satisfied with
 the general allowance given by Henry to all his subjects,
 went to that prince, then in Normandy; and having ob-
 tained a cold or ambiguous permission, prepared him-
 self for the execution of his designs. He first sent over
 Raymond, one of his retinue, with ten knights and se-
 venty archers, who landing near Waterford, defeated a
 body of three thousand Irish, that had ventured to at-
 tack him³; and as Richard himself, who brought over
 two hundred horse, and an hundred archers, joined in a
 few days after, the victorious English, they made them-
 selves masters of Waterford, and proceeded to Dublin,
 which was taken by assault. Roderic, in revenge, cut
 off the head of Dermot's son, who had been left as a
 hostage in his hands; and Richard, marrying Eva, be-
 came soon after, by the death of Dermot, master of
 the kingdom of Leinster, and prepared to extend his
 dominion over all Ireland. Roderic, and the other Irish
 princes, were alarmed with the danger; and combining
 together, besieged Dublin with an army of thirth thou-
 sand men: But earl Richard, making a sudden sally at
 the head of ninety knights, with their followers, put this
 numerous army to rout, chased them from the field
 of

¹ Girald. Cambr. p. 761, 762. ² Girald. Cambr. p. 766.

³ Girald. Cambr. p. 767.

of battle, and pursued them with great slaughter. None in Ireland now dared to oppose themselves to the English^B.

HENRY, jealous of the progress of his own subjects, sent orders to recall all the English, and he made preparations to attack Ireland in person^C: But Richard, and the other adventurers, found means to appease him, by making him the most humble submissions, and offering to hold all their acquisitions in vassalage to his crown^D. That monarch landed in Ireland at the head of five hundred knights, besides other soldiers; and found the Irish so dispirited by their late misfortunes, that, in a progress which he made through the island, he had no other occupation than to receive the homages of his new subjects^E. He left most of the Irish chieftains or princes in possession of their antient territories; bestowed some lands on the English adventurers; gave earl Richard the commission of justiciary of Ireland; and after a stay of a few months, returned in triumph to England. By these trivial exploits, scarce worth relating, except for the importance of the consequences, was Ireland subdued, and annexed for ever to the English crown.

THE low state of commerce and industry, during those ages, made it impracticable for princes to support regular armies, which might retain conquered countries in subjection; and the extreme barbarism and poverty of Ireland could still less afford means of bearing this expence. The only expedient by which a durable conquest could then be made or maintained, was by pouring in a multitude of new inhabitants, dividing among them the lands of the vanquished, establishing them in all offices of trust and authority, and thereby transforming the antient inhabitants into a new people. By this policy, the northern invaders of old, and of late the duke of Normandy, had been able to fix their dominion, and to erect kingdoms, which remained stable on their foundations, and were transmitted to the posterity of the first conquerors. But the present state of Ireland rendered that island so little inviting to the English, that only a few of desperate fortunes could be persuaded, from time to time,

^B Girald. Cambr. p. 773.

^C Ibid. p. 770.

^D Ibid.

p. 775.

^E Bened. Abb. p. 27, 28.

Hoveden, p. 527.

Diceto, p. 359.

C H A P. IX. time, to transport themselves into it^D; and instead of reclaiming the natives from their uncultivated manners, they were gradually assimilated to the antient inhabitants, and degenerated from the customs of their own nation: It was also found requisite to bestow great military and arbitrary powers on the leaders, who commanded a handful of men amidst such hostile multitudes; and law and equity, in a little time, became as much unknown in the English settlements as they had ever been among the Irish tribes. Palatinates were erected in favour of the new adventurers; independent authority conferred; the natives, never fully subdued, still retained their animosities against the conquerors: Their hatred was retaliated by like injuries; and from these causes, the Irish, during the course of four centuries, remained still savage and untractable; and it was not till the latter end of Elizabeth's reign, that the island was fully subdued; nor till that of her successor, that it gave hopes of becoming an useful conquest to the English nation.

BESIDES that the easy and peaceable submission of the Irish left Henry no farther occupation in that island, he was recalled from it by another incident, which was of the last importance to his interests and safety. The two legates, Albert and Theodin, to whom was committed the trial of his conduct in the death of archbishop Becket, were arrived in Normandy; and being impatient of delay, sent him frequent letters, full of menaces, if he protracted any longer the making his appearance before them^E. He hastened therefore to Normandy, and had a conference with them at Savigny, where their demands were so exorbitant, that he broke off the negotiation, threatened to return to Ireland, and bade them do their worst against him. They perceived that the season was now past for taking advantage of that tragical incident; which had it been hotly pursued by interdicts and excommunications, was capable of throwing the whole kingdom into combustion. But the time, which Henry had happily gained, had contributed to appease the minds of men: The event could not now have the same influence, as when it was recent; and as the clergy had every day looked for an accommodation with the king,

^D Brompton, p. 1069. Neubrig. p. 403.
Cambr. p. 778.

^E Girald.

king, they had not opposed the pretensions of his partisans, who had been very industrious in representing to the people his entire innocence in the murder of the primæ, and his ignorance of the designs formed by the assassins. The legates, therefore, found themselves obliged to lower their terms; and Henry was so fortunate as to conclude an accommodation with them. He declared upon oath, before the reliques of the saints, that so far from commanding or desiring the death of the archbishop, he was extremely grieved when he received intelligence of it: But as the passion which he had expressed on account of that prelate's conduct, had probably given occasion to his murder, he stipulated the following conditions as an atonement for the offence. He promised, that he should pardon all such as had been accommodated with the king's banished for adhering to Becket, and should restore them to their livings; that the see of Canterbury should be reinstated in all its antient possessions; that he should pay the templars a sum of money sufficient for the subsistence of two hundred knights during a year in the holy land; that he himself should take the cross at the Christmas following, and, if the pope insisted on it, serve three years against the infidels, either in Spain or Palestine; that he should not insist on the observance of such customs, derogatory to ecclesiastical privileges, as had been introduced in his own time; and that he should not stop appeals to the pope in ecclesiastical causes, but should content himself with exacting sufficient security of such clergymen as left his dominions to prosecute an appeal, that they should attempt nothing against the rights of his crown^r. Upon signing these concessions, Henry received absolution from the legates; was confirmed in the grant made by pope Adrian of Ireland^g; and nothing proves more strongly the great abilities of this monarch, than his extricating himself, on such easy terms, from so difficult a situation. He had always insisted, that the laws, established at Clarendon, contained not any new claims, but the antient customs of the kingdom; and he was still at liberty, notwithstanding the articles of this agreement, to maintain his pretensions. Appeals to the pope

^r M. Paris, p. 88. Benedict. Abb. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 529.
^g Diceto, p. 560. Chron. Gerv. p. 1422. Brompton, p.
 1071. Liber Nig. Scac. p. 47.

pope were indeed permitted by this treaty; but as the king was also permitted to exact reasonable securities from the parties, and might stretch his demands on this head as far as he pleased, he had it virtually in his power to prevent the pope from reaping any advantage by this seeming concession. And on the whole, the constitutions of Clarendon remained still the law of the realm; tho' the pope and his legates seem so little to have conceived the king's power to lie under any legal limitations, that they were satisfied with his departing, by treaty, from one of the most momentous articles of these constitutions, without requiring any repeal by the states of the kingdom.

HENRY, freed from this dangerous controversy with the ecclesiastics and with the see of Rome, seemed now to have reached the pinnacle of human grandeur and felicity, and to be equally happy in his domestic situation and in his political government. A numerous progeny of sons and daughters gave both lustre and authority to his crown, prevented the dangers of a disputed succession, and repressed all pretensions of the ambitious barons. The king's precaution also, in establishing the several branches of his family, seemed well calculated to prevent all jealousies among the brothers, and to perpetuate the greatness of his family. He had ordered Henry, his eldest son, to be anointed king, and had destined him for his successor in the kingdom of England, the duchy of Normandy, and the counties of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; territories which lay contiguous, and which, by that means, might easily lend to each other mutual assistance, both against intestine commotions and foreign invasions. Richard, his second son, was invested in the duchy of Guienne, and county of Poitou; Geoffrey, his third son, inherited, in right of his wife, the duchy of Brittany; and the new conquest of Ireland was destined for the appanage of John, his fourth son. He had also negotiated, in favour of this last prince, a marriage with Adelais the only daughter of Humbert, count of Savoy and Maurienne; and was to receive as her dowry very considerable demesnes in Piedmont, Savoy, Bresse, and Dauphiny. But this exaltation of his family excited the jealousy and envy of all his neighbours,

neighbours, who made those very sons, whose fortunes CH. A. P. 2
 he had so anxiously established, the means of imbitter- DXI.
 ing his future life and disturbing his government.

YOUNG Henry, who was rising to man's estate, began 1172
 to display his character, and aspire to independence:
 Brave, ambitious, liberal, magnificent, affable; he dis-
 covered qualities, which give great lustre to youth; pro-
 nosticate a shining fortune; but, unless tempered in ma-
 ture age with discretion, are the forerunners of the
 greatest calamities¹. It is said, that at the time when
 this prince received the royal unction, his father, in or-
 der to give the greater dignity to the ceremony, officiated
 at table as one of the retinue; and observed to his son,
 that never king was more royally served. *It in nothing*
extraordinary, said young Henry to one of his courtiers,
if the son of a count should serve the son of a king. This
 saying, which might pass only for an innocent pleasau-
 ry, or even for an oblique compliment to his father,
 was however regarded as a symptom of his aspiring tem-
 per; and his conduct soon after justified the con-
 jecture.

HENRY, agreeably to the promise which he had given
 both to the pope and French king, permitted his son to
 be crowned anew by the hands of the archbishop of
 Rouen, and associated the princess Margaret, spouse to
 young Henry, in this ceremony^K. He afterwards al- 1173.
 lowed him to pay a visit to his father-in-law at Paris,
 who took the opportunity of instilling into the young
 prince those ambitious sentiments, to which he was na-
 turally but too much inclined^L. Though it had been the Revolt of
 constant practice of France, ever since the accession of young
 the Capetian line, to crown the son during the life-time Henry
 of the father, without conferring on him any present par- and his
 ticipation of royalty; Lewis persuaded his son-in-law, brothers.
 that by this ceremony, which in those ages was deemed
 so momentous, he had acquired a total sovereignty, and
 that

¹ Chron. Gerv. p. 1463. ^K Hoveden, p. 529. Diceto,
 p. 560. Brompton, p. 1080. Chron. Gerv. p. 1421. Trivet,
 p. 58. It appears from Madoc's History of the Exchequer,
 that silk garments were then known in England, and that the
 coronation robes of the young king and queen cost eighty-se-
 ven pounds ten shillings and four pence, money of that age.

^L Girald. Camb. p. 782.

CHAP. that the king could not, without injustice, exclude him
 IX. from immediate possession of the whole, or at least a part
 of his dominions. In consequence of these extravagant
 1173- ideas, young Henry, on his return, desired the king to
 resign to him either the crown of England or the dutchy
 of Normandy^M; discovered great discontent on the re-
 fusals; spoke in the most undutiful terms of his father;
 and soon after, according to concert, made his escape to
 Paris, where he was protected and supported by the French
 monarch^N.

WHILE Henry was alarmed with this event, and had
 the prospect of dangerous intrigues, or even of a war,
 which, whether successful or not, must be extremely
 calamitous and disagreeable to him, he received intelli-
 gence of new misfortunes, which must have affected him
 in the most sensible manner. Queen Eleanor, who had
 disgusted her first husband by her gallantries, was no less
 offensive to her second, by her jealousy; and after this
 manner, carried to extremity, in the different periods
 of her life, every circumstance of female weakness. She
 communicated her discontents against Henry to her two
 younger sons, Geoffrey and Richard; persuaded them
 that they were also entitled to present possession of the
 territories assigned to them; engaged them to fly secretly
 to the court of France^O; and was meditating, herself,
 an escape to the same court, and had even put on man's
 apparel for that purpose; when she was seized by orders
 from her husband, and was thrown into confinement^P.
 Thus, Europe saw with astonishment the best and most
 indulgent of parents at war with his whole family; three
 boys, scarce arrived at the age of puberty, require a great
 monarch, in the full vigour of his age and height of his
 reputation, to dethrone himself in their favour; and se-
 veral princes not ashamed to support them in these unna-
 tural and absurd pretensions.

HENRY, reduced to this perilous and disagreeable
 situation had recourse to the court of Rome; and though
 sensible of the danger attending the interposition of ec-
 clesiastical

^M Bened. Abb. p. 37. Hoveden, p. 531. Brompton, p.
 1083. Chron. Gervase, p. 1424.

^N Hoveden, p. 533.
 Diceto, p. 561. Brompton, p. 1083. Heming, p. 499.

^P Chron. Gerv. p. 1424.

^O Bened. Abb. p. 48. Brompton, p. 1083. Neubrig. p. 404.

ecclesiastical authority in temporal disputes, applied to the pope, as his superior lord, to excommunicate his enemies, and by these censures to reduce to obedience his undutiful children, whom he found such a reluctance to punish by the sword of the magistrate. Alexander, well pleased to exert his power in so plausible a cause, issued the bulls required of him: But it was soon found, that these spiritual weapons had not equal force as when employed in a spiritual controversy; and that the clergy were very negligent in supporting a sentence, which was nowise calculated to promote the immediate interests of their order. The king, after taking in vain this humiliating step, was obliged to have recourse to arms, and to insist such auxiliaries, as are the usual resource of tyrants, and have seldom been employed by so wise and just a monarch.

THE loose government, which prevailed in all the states of Europe, the many private wars carried on among the neighbouring nobles, and the impossibility to enforce any general execution of the laws, had encouraged a tribe of banditti to disturb every where the public peace, to infest the high roads, to pillage the open country, and to brave all the efforts of the civil magistrate, and even the excommunications of the church, which were thundered out against them^R. Troops of them were sometimes insisted in the service of one prince or baron, sometimes in that of another: They often acted in an independent manner, under leaders of their own: The peaceable and industrious inhabitants, reduced to poverty by their ravages, were frequently obliged for subsistence to betake themselves to a like disorderly course of life: And a continual intestine war, pernicious to industry, as well as to the execution of justice, was thus carried on in the bowels of every kingdom^S. These desperate ruffians received the name sometimes of Brabançons, sometimes of Routiers or Cottereaux; but for what reason, is not agreed by historians: And they formed a kind of society

or

^Q Epist. Petri Blef. epist. 136. in Biblioth. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 1048. His words are, *Vestæ jurisdictionis est regnum Angliæ, et quantum ad feudatarii juris obligationem, vobis duntaxat obnoxius teneor*. The same paper is in Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. and Trivet, vol. i. p. 62. ^R Neubrig p. 413. ^S Chron. Gerv. p. 1461.

CHAP. or government among themselves, which set at defiance
IX. all the rest of mankind. The greatest monarchs were

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not ashamed, on occasion, to have recourse to their assistance; and as their habits of war and devastation had given them experience, hardness, and courage, they generally composed the most formidable part of those armies, which decided the political quarrels of princes. Several of them were enlisted among the forces levied by Henry's enemies^T; but the great treasures amassed by that prince enabled him to engage more numerous troops of them in his service; and the situation of his affairs rendered even such banditti the only forces on whose fidelity he could repose any confidence. His licentious, barons, disgusted with a vigilant government, were more desirous of being ruled by young princes, ignorant of public affairs, remiss in their conduct, and profuse in their grants^U; and as the king had ensured to his sons the succession to every particular province of his dominions, the nobles dreaded no danger in adhering to those who, they knew, must some time become their sovereigns. Prompted by these motives, many of the Norman nobility had deserted to his son Henry; the Breton and Gascon barons seemed equally disposed to embrace the quarrel of Geoffrey and Richard^X. Disaffection had crept in among the English; and the earls of Leicester and Chester in particular had openly declared against the king^Y: Twenty thousand Brabançons, therefore, joined to some troops, which he brought over from Ireland, and a few barons of approved fidelity, formed the sole force, with which he proposed to resist his enemies^Z.

LEWIS, in order to bind the confederates in a closer union, summoned at Paris an assembly of the chief vassals of the crown, received their approbation of his measures, and engaged them by oath to adhere to the cause of young Henry^A. That prince, in return, bound himself

^T Petr. Blef. epist. 47. ^U Diceto, p. 570. ^X Hoveden, p. 534. Trivet, p. 59. ^Y Ypod. Neuff. p. 448. Brompton, p. 1085. Neubrig. p. 405. Heming. p. 499. ^Z Hoveden, p. 534. Chron. Gerv. p. 1427. Neubrig. p. 405. Heming. p. 499. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 32. Trivet, p. 60. ^A Bened. Abb. p. 49. Hoveden, p. 533. Chron. Gerv. p. 1424.

self by a like tie never to desert his French allies; and having made a new great seal^B; he lavishly distributed among them many considerable parts of those territories which he proposed to conquer from his father^C. Philip, count of Flanders, Matthew, count of Boulogne, his brother, Theobald, count of Blois, Henry, count of Eu, partly moved by the general jealousy arising from Henry's power and ambition, partly allured by the prospect of reaping advantage from the inconsiderate temper and the necessities of the young prince, declared openly in favour of the latter. William, king of Scotland, had also entered into this great confederacy^D; and a plan was concerted for a general invasion on different places of the king's extensive and factious dominions.

Hostilities were first commenced by the counts of Flanders and Boulogne on the frontiers of Normandy. These princes laid siege to Aumale, which, by the treachery of the count of that name, was delivered into their hands^E: That nobleman surrendered himself prisoner; and, on pretence of thereby paying his ransom, opened the gates of all his other fortresses. The two counts next besieged and made themselves masters of Drincourt: But the count of Boulogne was here mortally wounded in the assault; and this event put some stop to the progress of the Flemish arms^F.

In another quarter, the king of France, being strongly assisted by his vassals, assembled a great army of seven hundred thousand knights and their followers on horseback, and a proportionable number of infantry; and carrying young Henry along with him, laid siege to Verneuil, which was vigorously defended by Hugh de Lacy and Hugh de Beauchamp, the governors^G. After he had lain a month before the place, the garrison, being straitened for provisions, were obliged to capitulate; and they engaged, if not relieved within three days, to surrender the town, and to retire into the citadel. On the last of these days, Henry appeared with his army upon the heights above Verneuil; and Lewis, dreading an assault, sent the archbishop

^B Brompton, p. 1084. ^C Bened. Abb. p. 49. Hoveden, p. 533. ^D Chron. Mailr. p. 172. Brompton, p. 1084.

^E Ypod. Neust. p. 449. Diceto, p. 571. ^F Hoveden, p. 534. Brompton, p. 1085. Neubrig. p. 405. Heming. p. 499. ^G Hoveden, p. 534.

CHAP. bishop of Sens and the count of Blois, to the English
IX. camp; and desired that next day should be appointed for
a conference, in order to establish a general peace, and
1173. terminate the differences between Henry and his sons.

The king, who passionately desired this accommodation, and suspected no fraud, gave his consent; but Lewis, that morning, obliging the garrison to surrender, according to the capitulation, set fire to the place, and began to retire with his army^H. Henry, provoked at this artifice, attacked the rear with vigour, put them to rout, executed some slaughter, and took several prisoners. The French army, as their time of service was now expired, immediately dispersed themselves into their several provinces; and left Henry free to prosecute his advantages against his other enemies.

THE nobles of Brittany, excited by the earl of Chester and Ralph de Fougeres, were all in arms; but their progress was checked by a body of Brabançons, which the king, after Lewis's retreat, had sent against them. The two armies came to an action near Dol; where the rebels were defeated, fifteen hundred killed on the spot, and the leaders, the earls of Chester and Fougeres, obliged to take shelter in the town of Dol^I. Henry hastened to form the siege of that place, and carried on the attack with such ardour, that he obliged the governor and garrison to surrender themselves prisoners of war^K. By these vigorous measures and happy successes, the insurrections, were entirely quelled in Brittany; and the king, thus fortunate in all quarters, willingly agreed to a conference with Lewis, in hopes, that his enemies, finding all their mighty efforts entirely frustrated, would agree to terminate hostilities on some moderate and reasonable conditions.

THE two monarchs met between Trine and Gisors; and Henry had here the mortification to see his three sons in the retinue of his mortal enemy. As Lewis had no other pretence for war than supporting the claims of these young princes, the king made them such offers as chil-

^H Bened. p. 57, 58, &c. Hoveden, p. 535. Diceto, p. 571, 572. Brompton, p. 1085, 1086, 1087. ^I Bened. Abb. p. 63. Hoveden, p. 535. ^K Benedict. Abb. p. 64, 65. Hoveden, p. 535. Diceto, p. 574. Neubrig. p. 406. Heming, p. 500. Trivet, p. 61.

children might be ashamed to insist on, and could be extorted from him by nothing but his parental affection, or by the present necessity of his affairs^L. He insisted only on retaining the sovereign authority in all his dominions; but offered young Henry half of the revenues of England, with some places of surety in that kingdom; or if he rather chose to reside in Normandy, half of the revenues of that dutchy, with all those of Anjou. He made a like offer to Richard in Guienne; he promised to resign all Brittany to Geoffrey; and if these concessions were not deemed sufficient, he agreed to add to them whatever the pope's legates, who were present, should require of him^M. The earl of Leicester was admitted to this negotiation; and either from the impetuosity of his temper, or from a view of breaking off abruptly a conference which must cover the allies with confusion, he gave vent to the most violent reproaches against Henry, and he even put his hand to his sword, as if he meant to attempt some violence upon him. This furious action threw the whole company into confusion, and put an end to the treaty^N.

THE chief hopes of Henry's enemies seemed now to depend on the state of affairs in England, where his authority was exposed to the most imminent danger. One article of young Henry's agreement with his foreign confederates, was, that he should resign Kent, with Dover and all its other fortresses, into the hands of the count of Flanders^A; yet so little national or public spirit prevailed among the independent English nobility, so wholly bent were they on the aggrandizement each of himself and his own family, that, notwithstanding this pernicious concession, which must have produced the ruin of the kingdom, the majority of them had conspired to make an insurrection and to support the prince's pretensions. The king's principal resource lay in the church and the bishops, with whom he was now in perfect agreement; whether that the decency of their character made them ashamed of supporting so unnatural a rebellion, or that they were entirely satisfied with Henry's atonement for the murder of Becket and for his former invasion of ecclesiastical

^L Hoveden, p. 539. ^M Hoveden, p. 536. Brompton, p. 1088. ^N Hoveden, p. 536. ^A Hoveden, p. 533. Brompton, p. 1084. Neubr. p. 508.

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clerical immunities. That prince, however, had resigned none of the essential rights of his crown in the accommodation; he maintained still the same prudent jealousy of the court of Rome; admitted no legate into England, without his swearing to attempt nothing against his royal prerogatives; and he had even obliged the monks of Canterbury, who pretended to a free election on the vacancy, made by the death of Becket, to choose Roger, prior of Dover, in the place of that turbulent prelate^B.

War with
Scotland.

THE king of Scotland now made an irruption into Northumberland, and committed great devastations; but being opposed by Richard de Lucy, whom Henry had left guardian of the realm, he retreated into his own kingdom, and agreed to a cessation of arms^C. This truce enabled the guardian to march southwards with his army, in order to oppose an invasion, which the earl of Leicester, at the head of a great body of Flemings, had made upon Suffolk. The Flemings had been joined by Hugh Bigod, who made them masters of his castle of Framingham; and marching into the heart of the kingdom, where they hoped to be supported by Leicester's vassals, they were met by Lucy, who, assisted by Humphrey Bohun, the constable, and the earls of Arundel, Gloucester, and Cornwall, had advanced to Farnham with a less numerous, but braver army, to oppose them. The Flemings, who were mostly weavers and other tradesmen (for manufactures were now beginning to be established in Flanders) were broken in an instant, ten thousand of them were put to the sword; the earl of Leicester was taken prisoner, and the remains of the invaders were glad to compound for a safe retreat into their own country^D.

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THIS great defeat did not dishearten the malcontents; who being supported by the alliance of so many foreign princes, and encouraged by the king's own sons, determined to persevere in their enterprize. The earl of Ferrars, Roger de Mowbray, Archétil de Mallory, Richard

^B Hoveden, p. 537. ^C M. Paris, p. 89. Hoveden, p. 536. Diceto, p. 573. Brompton, p. 1089. Neubrig. p. 407. ^D M. Paris, p. 89. Bened. Abb. p. 70. Hoveden, p. 536. Diceto, p. 574. Brompton, p. 1080. Neubrig. p. 407. Heming, p. 500.

ard de Moreville, Hamo de Mascie, together with many friends of the earls of Leicester and Chester, rose in arms^B: The fidelity of the earls of Clare and Gloucester was suspected; and the guardian, though vigorously supported by Geoffry, bishop of Lincoln, the king's natural son by the fair Rosamond, found it difficult defend himself on all quarters, from so many open and concealed enemies. The more to augment the confusion, the king of Scotland, on the expiration of the truce, broke into the northern provinces with a vast army^F of 80,000 men; which, though undisciplined and disorderly, and better adapted for committing devastation, than for executing any military enterprize, was become dangerous from the present factious and turbulent spirit of the kingdom. Henry, who had baffled all his enemies in France, and had put his frontiers in a posture of defence, now found England the seat of danger; and he determined by his presence to overawe the malcontents, or by his conduct and courage to subdue them. He landed at Southampton; and knowing the influence of superstition over the minds of the people, he immediately hastened to Canterbury, in order to make atonement to the ashes of Thomas a Becket, and tender his submissions, to a dead enemy. So soon as he came within sight of the church of Canterbury, he descended from horseback, walked bare-foot towards it, prostrated himself before the shrine of the saint, remained in fasting and prayer during a whole day, watched all night the holy reliques; and not satisfied with this hypocritical devotion towards a man, whose violence and ingratitude had so long disquieted his government, and had been the object of his most inveterate animosity, he submitted to a penance, still more singular and humiliating. He assembled a chapter of the monks, disrobed himself before them, put a scourge of discipline into each of their hands, and presented his bare shoulders to the lashes which these ecclesiastics successively inflicted upon him^G. Next day, he received absolution; and departing for London, got soon after the

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C c

agreeable

^B Bened. Abb. p. 54. Hoveden, p. 537. Neubrig. p. 407. ^F Heming. p. 501. ^G Ypod. Neust. p. 450. M. Paris, p. 90. Hoveden, p. 539. Diceto, p. 577. Brompton, p. 1095. Chron. Gerv. p. 1427. Neubrig. p. 410. Chron. Dunstable, p. 35.

CHAP. IX. agreeable intelligence of a great victory which his generals had obtained over the Scots, and which, being gained on the very day of his absolution, was regarded as the earnest of his final reconciliation with heaven and with Thomas a Becket ^H.

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WILLIAM, king of Scots, though repulsed before the castle of Prudhow, and other fortified places, had been able to commit the most horrible depredations upon the northern provinces¹; but on the approach of Ralph de Glanville, the famous lawyer and justiciary, seconded by Bernard de Baliol, Robert de Stuteville, Odonel de Umfreville, William de Vesci, and other northern barons, together with the gallant bishop of Lincoln, he thought proper to retreat nearer his own country, and fixed his station at Alnwick. He had here weakened his army extremely, by sending out numerous detachments in order to extend his ravages; and he lay absolutely safe, as he imagined, from any attack of the enemy. But Glanville, informed of his situation, made a hasty and fatiguing march to Newcastle; and allowing his soldiers only a small interval for refreshment, he immediately set out towards evening for Alnwick. He marched that night above thirty miles; arrived in the morning, under cover of a mist, near the Scots camp; and regardless of the great multitude of the enemy, he began the attack with his small, but determined, body of cavalry. William was living in such supine security, that he took the English at first for a body of his own ravagers, who were returning to the camp: But the sight of their banners convincing him of his mistake, he entered on the action with no more than a body of an hundred horse, in confidence, that the numerous army, which surrounded him, would soon hasten to his relief. He was dismounted on the first shock, and taken prisoner, while his troops, hearing of this disaster, fled on all sides with the utmost precipitation^K. The dispersed ravagers made the best of their way to their own country; and discord arising among

William,
king of
Scotland
defeated,
and taken
prisoner.

^H Ypod. Neust. p. 450. M. Paris, p. 90. Bened. Abb. p. 83. Hoveden, p. 539. M. West. p. 251. ^I Bened. Abb. p. 73. Hoveden, p. 537. Brompton, p. 1090. Chron. Gerv. p. 1427. Neubrig. p. 408. ^K Bened. Abb. p. 76. Brompton, p. 1091, 1092. Neubrig. p. 408, 409. Heming. p. 502.

among them, they proceeded even to mutual slaughter, and suffered more from each other's sword than from that of the enemy^L. CHAP.
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THIS great and important victory proved at last decisive in favour of Henry, and broke entirely the spirit of the English rebels. The bishop of Durham, who was preparing to revolt, made his submissions^M; Hugh Bigod, though he had received a strong reinforcement of Flemings, was obliged to surrender all his castles, and throw himself on the king's mercy^N; no other resource was left to the earl of Ferrars and Roger de Moubray^O; the inferior rebels imitating the example, all England was restored to tranquillity in a few weeks; and as the king appeared to lie under the immediate protection of heaven, it was deemed impious any longer to resist him. The clergy exalted anew the merits and powerful intercession of Becket; and Henry, instead of opposing this superstition, plumed himself on the new friendship of that saint, and propagated an opinion which was so favourable to his interests^P. 1174:

YOUNG Henry, who was ready to embark at Gravelines with the earl of Flanders and a great army, hearing of the suppression of his partizans in England, abandoned all thoughts of the enterprize, and joined the camp of the French king, who, during the absence of old Henry, had made an irruption into Normandy, and had laid siege to Rouen^Q. The place was defended with great vigour by the inhabitants^R; and Lewis, despairing of success by open force, tried to gain the town by a stratagem, which, in that superstitious age, was deemed very little honourable. He proclaimed in his own camp a cessation of arms on pretence of celebrating the festival of St. Laurence; and when the citizens, supposing themselves in safety, were so imprudent as to remit their guard, he proposed to take advantage of their security. Happily, some priests had, from mere curiosity, mounted a steeple, where the alarm bell hung; and observing the French camp in motion, they immediately rang the bell, and gave warning to the inhabitants, who ran to their several stations.

C c 2

^L Neubrig. p. 409. Heming. p. 502. ^M Bened. Abb. p. 76. ^N Diceto, p. 570. ^O M. Paris, p. 91. Heming. p. 504. ^P Hoveden, p. 539. ^Q Brompton, p. 1096. ^R Diceto, p. 578.

CHAP. stations. The French, who, on hearing the bell, hurried to the assault, had already mounted the walls in several places; but being repulsed by the enraged citizens, were obliged to retreat with considerable loss^s. Next day, Henry, who had hastened to the defence of his Norman dominions, passed over the bridge in triumph; and entered Rouen in sight of the French army. The city was now in absolute safety; and the king, in order to brave the French monarch, commanded the gates, which had been walled up, to be opened^T; and he prepared to push his advantages against the enemy. Lewis saved himself from this perilous situation by a new piece of deceit, not so justifiable. He proposed a conference for adjusting the terms of a general peace, which, he knew, would be greedily embraced, by Henry; and while the king of England trusted to the execution of his promise, he made a retreat with his army into France^w.

The king's accommodation with his sons.

THERE was, however, a necessity on both sides for an accommodation. Henry could no longer bear to see his three sons in the hands of his enemy; and Lewis dreaded, lest this great monarch, victorious in all quarters, crowned with glory, and absolute master of his dominions, might take revenge for the many dangers and inquietudes which the arms, and still more the intrigues of France, had, in his disputes both with Becket and his sons, been able to raise him. After making a cessation of arms, a conference was agreed on near Tours; where Henry granted his sons much less advantageous terms than he had formerly proffered; and he received their submissions. The most material of his concessions were some pensions which he stipulated to pay them, and some castles which he granted them for the place of their residence; together with an indemnity to all their adherents, who were restored to their estates and honours^x.

Of all those who had embraced the cause of the young princes, William, king of Scotland, was the only considerable sufferer, by that invidious and unjust enterprize.

Henry

^s Brompton, p. 1096. Neubrig. p. 411. Heming. p. 503.
^T Hoveden, p. 540. ^w Bened. Abb. p. 86. Brompton, p. 1098. ^x Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. Bened. Abb. p. 88. Hoveden, p. 540. Diceto, p. 583. Brompton, p. 1098. Heming. p. 505. Chron. Dunst. p. 36.

Henry delivered from confinement, without exacting any ransom, about nine hundred knights whom he had taken prisoners^y; but it cost William the antient independency of his crown as the price of his liberty. He stipulated to do homage to Henry, as his liege lord, for Scotland and all his other dominions; he engaged that all the barons and nobility of his kingdom should also do homage; that the bishops should swear fealty; that both should swear to adhere to the king of England against their native prince, if the latter should break his engagements; and that the fortresses of Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwic, Roxborough, and Jedborough should be delivered into Henry's hands, till the performance of articles^z.

This severe and humiliating treaty was executed in its full rigour. William, being released, brought up all his barons, prelates, and abbots; and they did homage to Henry in the cathedral of York, and acknowledged him and his successors for their superiour lord^a. The English monarch stretched still farther the rigour of the conditions which he exacted. He engaged the king and states of Scotland to make a perpetual cession of the fortresses of Berwic and Roxborough, and to allow the castle of Edinborough, to remain in his hands for a limited time. This was the first great ascendant which England obtained over Scotland; and indeed the first important event, which had passed between these kingdoms. Few princes have been so fortunate as to gain considerable advantages over their weaker neighbours with less violence and injustice, than was practised by Henry against the king of Scotland, whom he had taken prisoner in battle, and who had wantonly engaged in a war, in which all the neighbours of that prince, and even his own family, were, without provocation, combined against him^b.

HENRY,

^y Neubrig. p. 413. ^z M. Paris, p. 91. Chron. Dust. p. 26. Hoveden, p. 545. M. Westm p. 251. Diceto, p. 584. Brompton, p. 1103. Rymer, vol. i. p. 39. Liber Nigri Scaccarii, p. 36. ^a Bened Abb. p. 113. ^b Some Scots historians pretend, that William paid, besides, 100,000 pounds of ransom, which is quite incredible. The ransom of Richard, who, besides, England, possessed so many rich territories in France, was only 100,000 marks, and yet was levied with great difficulty.

CHAP. IX.

1175.
King's
equitable
adminis-
tration.

HENRY, having thus, contrary to expectation, extricated himself with honour from a situation, in which his throne was exposed to the most imminent danger, occupied himself for several years in the administration of justice, in the execution of the laws, and in guarding against those inconveniences, which either the past convulsions of his state, or the political institutions of that age, unavoidably occasioned. The provisions, which he made, shew such a largeness of thought as qualified him to become a legislator; and they were commonly calculated for the future as well as present happiness of his kingdom.

1175.

He enacted severe penalties against robbery, murder, false coining, burning houses; and ordained that these crimes should be punished by the amputation of the right hand and right foot^C. The pecuniary commutation for crimes, which has a false appearance of lenity, had been gradually disused; and seems to have been entirely abolished by the rigour of these statutes. The superstitious trial by water ordeal, though condemned by the church^D, still subsisted; but Henry ordained that any man, accused of murder or any heinous felony by the oath of the legal knights of the county, should even though acquitted by the ordeal, be obliged to abjure the realm^E.

ALL advances towards reason and good sense are slow and gradual. Henry, though sensible of the great absurdity, attending the trial by duel or battle, did not venture to abolish it: He only admitted either of the parties to challenge a trial by an assize or jury of twelve freeholders^F. This method of trial seems to have been very antient in England, and was fixed by the laws of king Alfred: But the barbarous and violent genius of the age had of late given more credit to the trial by battle, which had become the general method of deciding all important controversies. It was never abolished by law in England; and there is an instance of it so late as the reign of Elizabeth: But the institution revived by this king, being found more reasonable and more suitable to a civilized people, gradually prevailed over it.

THE

^C Bened. Abb. p. 132. Hoveden, p. 549. ^D Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 204. ^E Bened. Abb. p. 132. ^F Glanv. lib. ii. cap. 7.

THE partition of England into four divisions, and the appointment of itinerant justices to go the circuit in each division, and decide the causes in the counties, was another important ordinance of this prince, had a direct tendency to restrain the oppressions of the barons, and to protect the inferior gentry and common people in their property^F. Those justices were either prelates or considerable nobility; and besides carrying the authority of the king's commission, were able, by the dignity of their own character, to give weight and credit to the laws.

THAT there might be fewer obstacles to the execution of justice, the king was vigilant in demolishing all the new erected castles of the nobility, in England as well as in his foreign dominions; and he permitted no fortresses to remain in hands, whom he found reason to suspect^G.

BUT lest the kingdom should be exposed by this demolition of the strong places, the king fixed an assize of arms, by which all his subjects were obliged to put themselves in a situation proper for defending themselves and the realm. Every man, possessed of a knight's fee, was ordained to have for each fee a coat of mail, a helmet, a shield, and a lance; every free layman possessed of goods to the value of sixteen marks, was to be armed in like manner; every one possessed of ten marks was obliged to have an iron gorget, a cap of iron, and a lance; all burgesses were to have a cap of iron, a lance, and a wambais, that is, a coat quilted with wool, tow, or such other materials^H. It appears, that archery, for which the English were afterwards so renowned, had not, at this time, become very common among them. The spear was the chief weapon employed in battle.

THE clergy and the laity were during that age in a strange situation with regard to each other, and such as may seem totally incompatible with a civilized, and indeed with any government. If a clergyman was guilty of murder, he could only be punished by degradation: If he was murdered, the murderer was only exposed to excom-

^F Hoveden, p. 590. ^G Bened. Abb. p. 202. Diceto, p. 585. ^H Bened. Abb. p. 305. Chron. Gerv. p. 1459. Annal. Waverl. p. 161.

CHAP.

IX.

1176.

excommunication and ecclesiastical censures; and the crime was atoned for by penances and submission¹. Hence the assassins of Thomas a Becket himself, though guilty of the most atrocious wickedness, and the most repugnant to the sentiments of that age, lived securely in their own houses without being called to account by Henry himself, who was so much concerned both in honour and interest, to punish that crime, and who professed or affected on all occasions the most extreme abhorrence of it. It was not till they found their presence shunned by every one as excommunicated persons, that they were induced to take a journey to Rome, to throw themselves at the pope's feet, and to submit to the penances imposed upon them: After which, they continued to possess, without molestation, their honours and fortunes, and seem even to have recovered the countenance and good opinion of the public. But as the king, by the constitutions of Clarendon, which he endeavoured still to maintain in force^K, had subjected the clergy to a trial by the civil magistrate, it seemed but just to give them the protection of that power, to which they were subjected; and it was enacted, that the murderers of clergymen should be tried before the justiciary in the presence of the bishop or his official; and besides the usual punishment for murder, should be subjected to a forfeiture of their estates, and a confiscation of their goods and chattels^L.

THE king passed a very equitable law, that the goods of a vassal should not be seized for the debt of his lord, unless the vassal be surety for the debt; and that the rents of vassals should be paid to the creditors of the lord, not to the lord himself. It is remarkable, that this law was enacted by the king in a council which he held at Verneuil, and which consisted of some prelates and barons of England, as well as some of Normandy, Poitou, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Brittany; and the statute took place in all these different territories^M: A certain proof how irregular the antient feudal government was,

¹ Petri Blessen. epist. 73. apud Bibl. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 992. ^K Chron. Gervase, p. 1433. ^L Diceto, p. 592.

Chron. Gervase, p. 1433. ^M Bened. Abb. p. 248. It was usual for the kings of England, after the conquest of Ireland, to summon barons and members of that country to the English parliament. Mollineux's Case of Ireland, p. 64, 65, 66.

was, and how near the kings, in some instances, approached to despotism, though in others they seemed scarcely to possess any authority. If a prince, much dreaded and revered like Henry, obtained but the appearance of general consent to an ordinance, which was equitable and just, it became immediately an established law, and all the world acquiesced in it. If the prince was hated or despised; if the nobles, who supported him, had small influence; if the humours of the times disposed the people to question the justice of his ordinances; the fullest and most authentic assembly had no authority. Thus all was confusion and disorder; no regular ideas of a constitution prevailed; force and violence decided every thing.

THE success which had attended Henry in his wars did not encourage his neighbours to attempt any thing against him; and his transactions with them, during the remainder of his reign, contain little memorable. Scotland remained in that state of feudal subjection, to which he had reduced it; and gave him no farther inquietude. He sent over his fourth son, John, into Ireland, with a view of making a more compleat conquest of that island; but the petulance and incapacity of this prince, by which he enraged the Irish chieftains, obliged the king soon after to recall him^N. The king of France had fallen into a very abject superstition; and was induced by a devotion, more sincere than that of Henry, to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Becket^O, in order to obtain his intercession for the recovery of Philip, his eldest son. He probably thought himself well intitled to the favour of that saint, on account of their ancient intimacy; and hoped, that Becket whom he had protected while on earth, would not now, that he was so highly advanced in heaven, forget his old friend and benefactor. The monks, sensible that the saint's honour was concerned in the case, failed not to publish, that Lewis's prayers were answered, and that the young prince was, by Becket's intercession, restored to health^P. That king himself was soon after struck with an apoplexy, which deprived him of his judgment: Philip, though a youth of fifteen, took on him the

^N Bened. Abb. p. 437, &c. ^O M. Paris, p. 95. Bened. Abb. p. 318. Hoveden, p. 592. M. Westm. p. 252. Diceto, p. 604.

CHAP. administration, till his father's death, which happened

IX. soon after, opened his way to the throne; and he proved
 1176. the ablest and greatest monarch that had governed that kingdom, since the age of Charlemagne. The superior

years, however, and experience of Henry, while they moderated his ambition, gave him such an ascendant over this prince, that no dangerous rivalry, for a long time, arose between them. The English monarch, instead of taking advantage of his situation, rather employed his good offices to compose the quarrels which arose in the royal family of France; and he was successful in mediating a reconciliation between Philip and his mother and uncles^Q. These services were but ill requited by Philip, who, when he came to man's estate, fomented all the domestic discords in the royal family of England, and encouraged Henry's sons in their ungrateful and undutiful behaviour towards him.

1180. YOUNG Henry, equally impatient of obtaining power, and incapable of using it, renewed to the king his demand of resigning Normandy; and on meeting with a refusal, he fled with his consort to the court of France: But not finding Philip, at that time, disposed to enter into war for his sake, he accepted of his father's offers of reconciliation, and made his submissions. It was a cruel circumstance in the king's fortune, that he could hope for no tranquillity from the criminal enterprizes of his sons but by their mutual discord and animosities, which disturbed his family, and threw his state into convulsions. Richard, whom he had made master of Guienne, and who had displayed his valour and military genius, by suppressing the revolts of his mutinous barons, refused to obey Henry's orders, in doing homage to his elder brother for that duchy; and he defended himself against young Henry and Geoffrey, who, uniting their arms, carried war into his territories^R. The king with some difficulty composed this difference; but immediately found his eldest son engaged in conspiracies, and ready to take arms against himself. While the young prince was conducting these criminal designs, he was seized with a fever at Martel, a castle near Turenne, to which he had retired in discontent;

1183.

^Q Bened. Abb. p. 325. Hoveden. p. 593. Brompton. p. 1142. Chron. Gervase, p. 1459. ^R Ypod. Neust. p. 451. Bened. Abb. p. 383. Diceto, p. 617.

rent; and seeing the approaches of death, he was at last CHAP. IX.
struck with remorse for his undutiful behaviour towards his father. He sent a messenger to the king, who was not far distant; expressed his contrition for his faults; and entreated the favour of a visit, that he might at least die with the satisfaction of having received his forgiveness. Henry, who had so often experienced the prince's ingratitude and violence, apprehended that his sickness was entirely a feint, and he dared not entrust himself into his son's hands^s: But when he soon after received intelligence of young Henry's death, and the proofs of his sincere repentance, this good prince was affected with the deepest sorrow; he thrice fainted away; he accused his own hard-heartedness in refusing the dying request of his son; and he lamented, that he had deprived that prince of the last opportunity of making atonement for his offences, and of pouring out his soul in the bosom of his reconciled father^t. Young Henry died in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

1183.

11th June.
Death of
young
Henry.

THE behaviour of his surviving children was ill calculated to give the king any consolation for this loss. As prince Henry had left no posterity, Richard was become the heir of all his dominions; and the king intended, that John, his third surviving son and favourite, should inherit Guienne as his appanage: But Richard refused his consent, fled into that dutchy, and even made preparations for carrying on war, as well against his father as against his brother Geoffrey, who was now put in possession of Brittany. Henry sent for Eleanor, his queen, the heiress of Guienne, and required Richard to deliver up to her the dominion of these territories; which that prince, either dreading an insurrection of the Gascons in her favour, or retaining some sense of duty towards her, readily performed; and he returned peaceably to his father's court. No sooner was this quarrel accommodated, than Geoffrey, the most vicious perhaps of all Henry's unhappy family, broke out into violence; demanded Anjou to be annexed to his dominions of Brittany; and on meeting with a refusal, fled to the court of France, and

^s Bened. Abb. p. 392. Hoveden, p. 620. Brompton, p. 1143. Chron. Gervase, p. 1463. Neubrig. p. 422. Hemming, p. 507. ^t Bened. Abb. p. 393. Hoveden, p. 621. Trivet, vol. i. p. 84.

CHAP. and levied armies against his father ^U. Henry was freed from this danger by his son's death, who was slain in a tournament at Paris ^X. The widow of Geoffrey, soon after his decease, was delivered of a son, who received the name of Arthur, and was invested in the duchy of Brittany, under the guardianship of his grandfather, who, as duke of Normandy, was also superior lord of that territory. Philip, as lord paramount, disputed some time his title to this wardship; but was obliged to yield to the inclinations of the Bretons, who preferred the government of Henry.

1183-

Crusades. BUT the rivalry among these potent princes, and all their inferior interests, seemed now to have given place to the general passion for the relief of the holy land, and the expulsion of the Saracens. Those infidels, though obliged to yield to the immense inundation of christians in the first crusade, had recovered courage after the torrent was past; and attacking on all quarters the settlements of the Europeans, had reduced them to great difficulties, and obliged them to apply again for succours from the west. A second crusade, under the emperor Conrade, and Lewis VII. king of France, in which there perished above 200,000 men, brought them but a temporary relief; and these princes, after losing such immense armies, and seeing the flower of their nobility fall by their side, returned with little honour into Europe. But these repeated misfortunes, which drained the western world of its people and treasure, were not yet sufficient to cure men of their passion for those spiritual adventures; and a new incident rekindled with fresh fury the zeal of the ecclesiastics and military adventurers among the Latin christians. Saladin, a prince of great generosity, bravery, and conduct, having fixed himself on the throne of Egypt, began to extend his conquest over the East; and finding the settlements of the christians in Palestine an invincible obstacle to the progress of his arms, he bent the whole force of his policy and valour to subdue that small and barren, but important territory. Taking advantage of dissensions, which prevailed among the champions of the cross, and having secretly gained the count of Tripoli, who commanded their armies, he invaded the frontiers with

^U Neubrig. p. 422.
Gervase, p. 1480.

^X Bened. Abb. p. 451. Chron.

with a mighty power; and, aided by the treachery of CHAP: IX.
that count, gained at Tiberiade a compleat victory over them, which utterly annihilated the force of the already languishing kingdom of Jerusalem. The holy city itself fell into his hands after a feeble resistance; the kingdom of Antioch was almost entirely subdued; and except some maritime towns, nothing considerable remained of those boasted conquests, which, near a century before, had cost the efforts of all Europe to acquire ^{1187.} ^{Y.}

THE western christians were astonished on receiving this dismal intelligence. Pope Urban III. it is pretended, died of grief; and his successor, Gregory VIII. employed the whole time of his short pontificate in rousing to arms all the christians who acknowledged his authority. The general cry was, that they were unworthy of enjoying any inheritance in heaven, who did not vindicate from the dominion of the infidels the inheritance of God on earth, and deliver from slavery that country which had been consecrated by the foot-steps of their Saviour. William, archbishop of Tyre, having procured a conference between Henry and Philip near Gisors, enforced all these topics; gave a pathetic description of the miserable state of the eastern christians; and employed every argument to excite the ruling passions of the age, superstition and jealousy of military honour ^{1188.} ^{21st January.} ^{Z.} The two monarchs immediately took the cross; many of their most considerable vassals imitated the example ^{A.}; and as the emperor Frederic I. entered into the same confederacy, some well grounded hopes of success were entertained; and men flattered themselves, that an enterprize, which had failed under the conduct of many independent chieftains, or of imprudent princes, might at last, by the efforts of such potent and able monarchs, be brought to a happy issue.

THE kings of France and England imposed a tax, amounting to the tenth of all moveable goods, on such as remained at home ^{B.}; but as they exempted from this burden most of the regular clergy, the secular aspired to the same privilege; pretended that it was only their duty to assist the crusade with their prayers; and it was with some difficulty they were obliged to desist from an opposition,

^Y M. Paris, p. 100. ^Z Bened. Abb. p. 531. ^A Neubrig. p. 435. Heming. p. 512. ^B Bened. Abb. p. 498.

CHAP. tion, which in them, who had been the chief instigators
IX. to these pious enterprizes, appeared with the worst grace
imaginable ^c. This backwardness of the clergy is per-

1188. haps a symptom, that the enthusiastic ardour, which had
at first seized the people for crusades, was now conside-
rably abated by time and ill success; and that the frenzy
was chiefly supported by the military genius and love of
glory in the great monarchs.

1189. BUT before this great machine could be put in motion,
there were still many obstacles to surmount. Philip,
jealous of Henry's greatness, entered into a private con-
federacy with young Richard, and working on his am-
bitious and impatient temper, persuaded him, instead of
supporting and aggrandizing that monarchy, which he
was one day to inherit, to seek present power and inde-
pendence, by disturbing and dismembering it. In order

Revolt of
prince
Richard.

to give a pretence for hostilities between the two kings,
Richard broke into the territories of Raymond, count of
Tholouse, who immediately carried his complaints of
this violence before the king of France as his superior
lord. Philip remonstrated with Henry; but received for
answer, that Richard had confessed to the archbishop of
Dublin, that his enterprize against Raymond had been
undertaken by the approbation of Philip himself, and
was conducted by his authority. The king of France,
who might have been covered with shame and confusion
by this detection, still prosecuted his design, and broke
into the provinces of Berr and Auvergne, under colour
of revenging the quarrel of the count of Tholouse ^d.
Henry retaliated by making inroads upon the frontiers of
France, and burning Dreux. As this war, which de-
stroyed all hopes of success in the projected crusade, gave
great scandal, the two kings held a conference at the ac-
customed place between Gisors and Trie, in order to find
means of accommodating their differences: They sepa-
rated on worse terms than before; and Philip, to shew
his disgust, ordered a great elm, under which the confe-
rences had been usually held, to be cut down ^e; as if he
had renounced all desire of accommodation, and was de-
termined to carry the war to extremity against the king
of England. But his own vassals refused to serve under
him

^c Petri Blesensis. epist. 112.

^e Bened. Abb. p. 517, 532.

^d Bened. Abb. p. 508.

him in so invidious a cause^F; and he was obliged to come anew to a conference with Henry, and to offer terms of peace. These terms were such as entirely opened the eyes of the king of England, and fully proved to him the perfidy of his son, and his secret alliance with Philip, of which he had before only entertained some suspicions. The king of France required, that Richard should be crowned king of England in the life-time of his father, should be invested in all his transmarine dominions, and should be immediately married to Alice, Philip's sister, to whom he had formerly been contracted, and who had already been conducted into England^G. Henry had experienced such fatal effects, both from the crowning his eldest son, and from that prince's alliance with the royal family of France, that he rejected these terms; and Richard, in consequence of his secret agreement with Philip, immediately revolted from him^H, did homage to the king of France for all the dominions which Henry held of that crown, and received the investitures, as if he had already been the lawful proprietor. Some historians assert, that Henry himself had become enamoured of young Alice, and assign this as an additional reason for his refusing these conditions: But he had so many other just and equitable motives for his conduct, that it is superfluous to assign a cause, which the great prudence and advanced age of that monarch rendered somewhat improbable.

CARDINAL Albano, the pope's legate, displeased with these increasing obstacles to the crusade, excommunicated Richard, as the chief spring of discord: But the sentence of excommunication, which, when it was properly prepared, and was zealously supported by the clergy, had often great influence in that age, proved entirely ineffectual in the present case. The chief barons of Poitou, Guienne, Normandy, and Anjou, being attached to the young prince, and seeing that he had now received the investiture from their superior lord, declared for him, and made inroads into the territories of such as still adhered to the old king. Henry, disquieted by the daily revolts of his mutinous subjects, and dreading still worse effects from their turbulent disposition, had again recourse to

^F Ibid. p. 519. ^G Bened. Abb. p. 521. Hoveden, p. 652. ^H Brompton, p. 1149. Neubrig. p. 437.

CHAP. to papal authority; and engaged the cardinal Anagni, IX. who had succeeded Albano in the legateship, to threaten Philip with laying an interdict on all his dominions. But 1189. Philip, who was a prince of great vigour and capacity, despised the menace, and told Anagni, that it belonged not to the pope to interpose in the temporal disputes of princes, much less in those between him and his rebellious vassals. He even proceeded so far as to reproach him with partiality, and with receiving bribes from the king of England ^A; while Richard, still more outrageous, offered to draw his sword against the legate, and was only hindered by the interposition of the company, from committing violence upon him ^B.

THE king of England was now obliged to defend his dominions by arms, and to enter on a war with France and with his eldest son, a prince of great valour, on such disadvantageous terms. Ferte-Barnard fell first into the hands of the enemy: Mans was next taken by assault; and Henry, who had thrown himself into that place, escaped with some difficulty ^C: Amboise, Chaumont, and Chateau de Loire, opened their gates on the appearance of Philip and Richard: Tours was invested; and the king, who had retired to Saumur, and had daily instances of the cowardice or infidelity of his governors, expected the most dismal issue to all his enterprizes. While he was in this state of dependency, the duke of Burgandy, the count of Flanders, and the archbishop of Rheims interposed with their good offices; and the intelligente, which he received of the taking of Tours, and which made him fully sensible of the desperate situation of his affairs, so subdued his spirit, that he submitted to all the rigorous terms, which were imposed upon him. He agreed, that Richard should marry the princess Alice; that that prince should receive the homage and oath of fealty of all his subjects both in England and his transmarine dominions; that he himself should pay twenty thousand marks to the king of France as a compensation for the charges of the war; that his own barons should engage to make him observe this treaty by force, and in case of his violating it, should promise to join Philip and Richard against

^A M. Paris, p. 104. Bened. Abb. p. 542. Hoveden, p. 652. ^B M. Paris, p. 104. ^C M. Paris, p. 105. Bened. Abb. p. 543. Hoveden, p. 653.

against him; and that all his vassals, who had entered into confederacy with Richard, should receive an indemnity for this offence ^D.

BUT the mortification, which Henry, who had been accustomed to give the law in most treaties, received from these disadvantageous terms, was the least which he met with on this occasion. When he demanded a list of those barons, to whom he was to grant a pardon for their connexions with Richard; he was astonished to find, at the head of them, the name of his second son, John ^E; who had always been his favourite, whose interests he had ever anxiously at heart, and who had even, on account of his ascendant over him, often excited the jealousy of Richard ^F. This unhappy father, already overloaded with cares and sorrows, finding this last disappointment in his domestic tenderness, broke out into expressions of the utmost despair, cursed the day in which he received his miserable being, and bestowed, on his ungrateful and undutiful children, a malediction which he never could be prevailed on to retract ^G. The more his heart was disposed to friendship and affection, the more he resented the barbarous return, which his four sons had successively made to his parental care; and this finishing blow, by depriving him of every comfort in life, quite broke his spirits, and threw him into a lingering fever, of which he soon after expired, at the castle of Chinon near Saumur. His natural son, Geoffrey, who alone had behaved dutifully towards him, attended his corpse to the nunnery of Fontevault; where it lay in state in the abbey-church. Next day, Richard, who came to visit the dead body of his father, and who, notwithstanding his criminal conduct, was not devoid altogether of generosity, was struck with horror and remorse at the sight; and as the assistants observed, that, at that very instant, blood gushed out of the mouth and nostrils of the corpse ^H, he exclaimed, according to a vulgar superstition, that he was his father's murderer; and he expressed a deep sense, though too late, of that undutiful behaviour, which had brought his parent to an untimely grave ^I.

6th July.
Death,

VOL. I.

D d

THUS

^D M. Paris, p. 106. Bened. Abb. p. 545. Hoveden, p. 653. ^E Hoveden, p. 654. ^F Bened. Abb. p. 541.

^G Hoveden, p. 654. ^H Bened. Abb. p. 547. Brompton, p. 1151. ^I M. Paris, p. 107.

CHAP.

IX.

1189.
and character of
Henry.

THUS died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and thirty-fifth of his reign, the greatest prince of his time for wisdom, virtue and ability, and the most powerful in extent of dominion of all those that had ever filled the throne of England. His character, in private as well as public life, is almost without a blemish; and he seems to have possessed every accomplishment both of body and mind, which makes a man either estimable or amiable. He was of a middle stature, strong and well proportioned; his countenance was lively and engaging; his conversation affable and entertaining; his elocution easy, persuasive, and ever at command. He loved peace, but possessed both bravery and conduct in war; was provident without timidity; severe in the execution of justice without rigour; and temperate without austerity. He preserved health, and kept himself from corpulency, to which he was somewhat inclined, by an abstemious diet, and by frequent exercise, particularly hunting. When he could enjoy leisure, he recreated himself either in learned conversation or in reading; and he cultivated his natural talents by study, above any prince of his time. His affections, as well as his enmities, were warm and durable; and his long experience of the ingratitude and infidelity of men never destroyed the natural sensibility of his temper, which disposed him to friendship and society. His character has been transmitted to us by many writers, who were his contemporaries^x; and it resembles extremely, in its most remarkable strokes, that of his maternal grandfather Henry I. Excepting only that ambition, which was a ruling passion in both, found not in the first Henry such unexceptionable means of exerting itself, and pushed that prince into measures, which were both criminal in themselves, and were the cause of farther crimes, from which his grandson's conduct was happily exempted.

THIS prince, like most of his predecessors of the Norman line, except Stephen, passed more of his time on the continent than in this island: He was surrounded with the English gentry and nobility, when abroad: The French gentry and nobility followed him when he resided in England: Both nations acted in the government,

^x Petri. Bles. epist. 46, 47, in Bibliotheca Patrum, vol. xxiv. p. 985, 986, &c. Girald. Camb. p. 783, &c.

ment, as if they were the same people; and on many occasions, the legislatures seem not to have been distinguished. As the king and English barons were all of them of French extraction, the manners of that people acquired the ascendant, and were regarded as the great models of imitation. All foreign improvements, therefore, such as they were, in literature and politeness, in laws and arts, seem now to have been, in a good measure, transplanted into England; and that nation was become nowise inferior, in all the fashionable accomplishments, to any of its neighbours on the continent. The more homely, but more sensible manners and principles of the Saxons, were exchanged for the affectations of chivalry, and the subtilties of school philosophy: The feudal ideas of civil government, the Romish sentiments of religion, had taken entire possession of the people: By the former, the sense of submission towards princes was somewhat diminished in the barons; by the latter, the devoted attachment to papal authority was much augmented among the clergy. The Norman and other foreign families, established in England, had now struck deep root; and being entirely coalited with the people, whom at first they oppressed and despised, they no longer thought that they needed the protection of the crown for the enjoyment of their fortunes, or considered their tenure as precarious and dependent. They aspired to the same liberty and independence, which they saw enjoyed by their brethren on the continent, and desired to restrain those exorbitant prerogatives and arbitrary practices, which the necessities of war and the violence of conquest had at first obliged them to indulge in their monarch. That memory also of a more equable government under the Saxon princes, which remained with the English, diffused still farther the spirit of liberty, and made the barons both desirous of more independence to themselves, and willing to indulge it to the people. And it was not long before this secret revolution in the sentiments of men produced, first violent convulsions in the state, then an evident alteration in the maxims of government.

THE history of all the preceding kings of England since the conquest, give evident proofs of the disorders attending the feudal institutions; the licentiousness of the barons, their spirit of rebellion against the prince and laws, and of animosity against each other: The conduct

CHAP. of the barons in the transmarine dominions of those monarchs afforded perhaps still more flagrant instances of these convulsions; and the history of France, during several ages, consists almost entirely of narrations of this nature. The cities, during the continuance of this violent government, could neither be very populous nor numerous; and there occur instances, which seem to prove, that, though these are always the first seat of law and liberty, their police was in general very loose and irregular, and exposed to the same disorders, with those by which the country was generally infested. It was a custom in London for great numbers, to the amount of a hundred or more, of the sons and relations of eminent citizens, to form themselves into a licentious confederacy, to break into rich houses and plunder them, to rob and murder the passengers, and to commit with impunity all sorts of disorder. By these crimes, it had become so dangerous to walk the streets by night, that the citizens dared no more to venture abroad after sun-set, than if they had been exposed to the incursions of a public enemy. The brother of the earl of Ferrars had been murdered by some of these nocturnal rioters; and the death of a person of such noble birth, which was much more regarded than that of many thousands of an inferior station, so provoked the king, that he swore vengeance against the criminals, and became thenceforth much more rigorous in the execution of the laws ^L.

THERE is another instance given by historians, which proves to what a height such riots had proceeded, and how open these criminals were in committing their robberies. A band of them had attacked the house of a rich citizen, with an intention of plundering it; had broke through a stone wall with hammers and wedges; and had already entered the house sword in hand; when the citizen, armed cap-a-pee and supported by his faithful servants, appeared in the passage to oppose them: He cut off the right hand of the first robber that entered; and made such a stout resistance, that his neighbours had leisure to assemble and come to his relief. The man, who lost his hand, was caught; and was tempted by the promise of pardon to reveal his confederates, among whom was one John Senex, esteemed among the richest and best born citizens of London. He was convicted by the ordeal

^L Bened. Abb. p. 196.

ordeal trial; and though he offered five hundred marks for his life, the king refused the money, and ordered him to be hanged^M.

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HENRY's exactness in administering justice had gained him so great reputation, that even foreign and distant princes made him an arbiter, and submitted their differences to his judgment. Sanchez, king of Navarre, having some controversies with Alfonso, king of Castile, was contented, though Alfonso had married the daughter of Henry, to chuse this prince for a referee; and they agreed, each of them, to consign three castles into neutral hands, as a pledge of their not departing from his award. Henry made the cause be examined before his great council, and gave a sentence, which was willingly submitted to by both parties. These two Spanish kings sent each a stout champion to the court of England, in order to defend his cause by arms, in case the way of duel had been chosen by Henry^N.

HENRY so far abolished the barbarous and absurd practice of confiscating ships, which had been wrecked on the coast, that he ordained, if one man or animal was alive in the ship, the vessel and goods should be restored to the owners^O.

THE reign of Henry was remarkable for an innovation, which was afterwards carried farther by his successors, and was attended with the most important consequences to the government. This prince was disgusted with the species of military force, which was established by the feudal institutions, and which, though it was extremely burdensome to the subject, yet rendered very little service to the sovereign. The barons, or military tenants, came late into the field; they were obliged to serve only for forty days; they were unskilful and disorderly in all their operations; and they were apt to carry into the camp the same refractory and independent spirit, to which they were accustomed in their civil government. Henry, therefore, introduced the practice of making a commutation of their military service for money; and he levied scutages from his baronies and knights fees, instead of requiring the personal attendance of his vassals. There

^M Ibid. p. 197, 198.

^N Rymer, vol. iv. p. 43. Bened. Abb. p. 172. Diceto, p. 597. Brompton, p. 1120. ^O Rymer, vol. i. p. 36.

CHAP. There is mention made, in the history of the exchequer, of these scutages in his second, fifth, and eighteenth year^P; and other writers give us an account of three more of them^Q. When the prince had thus obtained money, he made a contract with some of those adventurers, in which Europe at that time abounded: They found him soldiers of the same character with themselves, who were bound to serve for a stipulated time: The armies were much less numerous, but more useful, than when composed of all the military vassals of the crown: The feudal institutions began to relax: The kings became rapacious for money, on which all their power depended: The barons, seeing no end of exactions, sought to defend their property: And as the same causes had nearly the same effect, in the different countries of Europe, the several crowns either lost or acquired authority, according to their different success in this contest.

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THIS prince was also the first who levied a tax on the moveables or personal estates of his subjects, nobles as well as people. Their zeal for the holy wars made them submit to this innovation; and a precedent being once obtained, this taxation became, in following reigns, the usual method of supplying the necessities of the crown. The tax of Danegelt, so generally odious to the nation, was remitted in this reign.

It was an usual practice of the kings of England, to repeat the ceremony of their coronation thrice every year, on assembling the states at the three great festivals. Henry, after the first year of his reign, never renewed this ceremony, which was found to be very expensive and very useless. None of his successors ever revived it. It is deemed a great act of grace in this prince, that he mitigated the rigour of the forest laws, and punished any transgressions of them, not capitally, but by fines, imprisonments, and other more moderate penalties.

SINCE we are here collecting some detached incidents, which shew the genius of the age, and which could not so well enter into the body of the history, in may not be amiss to mention the quarrel between Roger archbishop of York, and Richard archbishop of Canterbury. We may judge of the violence of military men and laymen, when ecclesiastics could proceed to such extremities.

Cardinal

^P Madox, p. 435, 436, 437, 438. ^Q Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 466. from the records.

Cardinal Haguezun being sent, in 1176, as legate into Britain, summoned an assembly of the clergy at London; and as both the archbishops pretended to sit on his right hand, this question of precedence begot a controversy between them. The monks and retainers of archbishop Richard fell upon Roger, in the presence of the cardinal and of the synod, threw him on the ground, trampled him under foot, and so bruised him with blows that he was taken up half dead, and his life was, with difficulty, saved from their violence. The archbishop of Canterbury was obliged to give a large sum of money to the legate, in order to suppress all complaints of this enormity ^R.

THIS king left only two legitimate sons, Richard, who succeeded him, and John, who inherited no territory, though his father had often intended to leave him a part of his extensive dominions. He was thence commonly denominated *Lacland*. Henry left three legitimate daughters; Maud, born in 1156, and married to Henry, duke of Saxony; Eleanor, born in 1162, and married to Alphonso, king of Castile; Joan, born in 1165, and married to William, king of Sicily ^S.

HENRY is said by antient historians to have been of a very amorous disposition; and they mention two of his natural sons by Rosamond, daughter of lord Clifford, viz. Richard Longespee, or Longsword, (so called from the sword he usually wore) who was afterwards married to Ela, the daughter and heir of the earl of Salisbury; and Geoffrey, first bishop of Lincoln, and then archbishop of York. All the other circumstances of the story commonly told of that lady seem to be fabulous.

^R Bened. Abb. p. 138, 139. Brompton, p. 1109. Chron. Gerv. p. 1433. Neubrig. p. 413. ^S Diceto, p. 616.



